

A. B. P A N D E Y

Later
Medieval
INDIA

218

CENTRAL BOOK DEPOT
ALLAHABAD

STATE MUSEUM, LUCKNOW
LIBRARY

Acc. No. _____

Book No. _____

954.02

LATER MEDIEVAL INDIA
A history of the Mughals

CENTRAL BOOK DEPOT
PUBLICATIONS IN HISTORY

- Tripathi, R. P. Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire
Tripathi, R. P. Some Aspects of Muslim Administration
Habibullah, A. B. M. Foundation of Muslim Rule in India
Thompson and Garratt. Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule
in India
Banarsi Prasad. History of Shah Jahan of Dihli
Moreland W. H. The Agrarian System of Moslem India
Pandey, A. B. A History of the Mughals
Pandey, A. B. Early Mediaeval India
Holland Rose. French Revolution and Napoleonic Era
Gershoy. French Revolution and Napoleon
Chou Hsiang-kuang. A History of Chinese Culture
Keith, A. B. Constitutional History of India
Tripathi, R. P. Mughal Samraj ka Utthan and Patan
Panday, A. P. Purv Madhyakalin Bharat

LATER MEDIEVAL INDIA

A history of the Mughals

A. B. Pande, M. A., D. Phil.
*Reader in History, Banaras Hindu University
Banaras*



CENTRAL BOOK DEPOT
ALLAHABAD

© Copyright 1963
Central Book Depot.

954.02

P L

• All rights reserved.

Printed in India at the
Indian Universities Press and
Published by Central Book Depot,
Allahabad.

PREFACE

Later Medieval India is comparison volume to the author's *Early Medieval India* and brings the history of our land to the year 1761. Here the treatment is more topical than chronological. The first four chapters deal with the foundation of Timurid rule in India and the struggle against the Afghans. It has been considered more expedient to deal with the military and political achievements of the Surs and their place in Indian History in a single chapter. Chapter V-XII take up the story of expansion of the empire under Akbar, Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. They deal mostly with military and diplomatic history except that Chap. V introduces this section by general remarks on the nature and character of Mughal imperialism. Similarly, Chapter XIII introduces the section on disintegration by briefly reviewing the various forces of disintegration and their general characteristics. Chapters XX-XXV deal with political institutions, both civil and military of the Mughals and the Marathas and provide a comparative perspective. Finally, Chapters XXVI to XXVIII provide a broad review of social and cultural life of the classes and the masses. Chapter XXIX concludes this survey of later medieval India by giving a general estimate of principal men and movements of this age.

For each chapter or group of chapters, some further readings have been suggested with specific reference to relevant chapters wherever possible. It contains 8 specially drawn maps and a brief index.

The type script of the book had been sent to the publishers over 2½ years ago. For various reasons, they could not arrange for its printing earlier than this. In the meantime, I have been called away to another sphere of activity so engrossing and so momentous that I have not been able to see it through the press with the result that the printing has not been as careful as it should have been.

However, I am grateful to the publishers for bringing out the book despite their handicaps and difficulties. My thanks are also due to my friend Shri N. G. Bhattacharji who has drawn the maps for this book. Many friends and students have in various ways contributed to the preparation of this book and I thank them all for their kindness and cooperation.

Gangamahar, Kedarghat,
Varanasi.

A. B. Pandey

31st August, 1963.

CONTENTS

Preface

i
PAGE
I

CHAPTER I. TIMUR AND BABAR

ANCESTRY OF TIMUR; TIMUR'S PUBLIC CAREER; SUCCESSORS OF TIMUR; ZAHIRUDDIN MUHAMMAD BABAR IN INDIA; POST-PANIPAT DEVELOPMENTS; CONCILIATION AND CONQUEST; THE BATTLE OF KHANUA (1527); DEFEAT OF MEDINI RAI (1528); AFGHAN REBELLIONS AND COUNTER-OFFENSIVES; CENTRAL ASIA; EARLY CAREER OF HUMAYUN; TRAINING IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS; HUMAYUN'S STAY AT ENDAKHSAN (1527-1529); HUMAYUN'S ILLNESS AND THE DEATH OF BABAR; HUMAYUN NOMINATED SUCCESSOR; ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP UNDER BABAR; ESTABLISHMENT OF BABAR'S WORK IN INDIA; BEGINNING OF A NEW AGE; DIVINITY OF THE MONARCHY; SECULAR SOVEREIGNTY; GROWTH OF FINE ARTS; SPIRIT OF TOLERATION; GROWTH OF LOCAL LANGUAGES; EUROPEAN TRADING COMPANIES; BABAR'S CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY : AS A WARRIOR; AS A RULER; AS A MAN OF LETTERS; AS A MAN.

CHAPTER II. HUMAYUN AND SHER KHAN (STRUGGLE FOR SUPREMACY) ...

24

POSITION AND PROSPECTS; EARLY MEASURES; KALINJAR AND KAMRAN; THE BATTLE OF DADRAH (1532); EARLY CAREER OF SHER KHAN; FARID AS THE OFFICER OF A PARGANA; FARID AND IBRAHIM LODI; FARID'S RELATIONS WITH MUHAMMAD SHAH NUHANI; SHER KHAN GOES TO BABAR; SHER KHAN AS THE RULER OF BIHAR; SHER KHAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS HUMAYUN; SIEGE OF CHUNAR (1531); RELATIONS WITH BAHADUR SHAH OF GUJERAT; CONQUEST OF MALWA AND GUJERAT (1535); REVOLT IN GUJERAT (1536); DECLINE SETS IN; ASKARI FORGIVEN; DISAFFECTION IN THE EAST; CONQUEST OF BENGAL BY SHER KHAN (1536-1538); HUMAYUN CAPTURES GAUR (1538); HUMAYUN'S STRATEGY; SHER KHAN'S POSITION

AND POLICY; FURTHER RISE IN THE POWER OF SHER KHAN; HUMAYUN'S RETREAT FROM BENGAL; THE BATTLE OF CHAUSA (1529); CORONATION OF SHER SHAH (1539); THE BATTLE OF KANAUJ OR BILGRAM (1540); SHER SHAH CAPTURES DELHI AND AGRA; EXPUISION OF HUMAYUN FROM INDIA; CAUSES : PERSONALITY OF SHFR SHAH; MISTAKES OF HUMAYUN; RELATIVE POPULARITY OF THE AFGHANS; HUMAYUN STARTS ON HIS TRAVELS OUTSIDE INDIA; HIS RELATIONS WITH SHAH TAHMASP; RELATIONS WITH KAMRAN; OBSTACLES TO HUMAYUN'S RETURN TO INDIA; DEATH OF HUMAYUN (1556); IMPORTANCE OF HIS REIGN; HIS CHARACTER.

CHAPTER III. RISE AND FALL OF THE SECOND AFGHAN EMPIRE ...

54

SHER SHAH SUR (1540-1545); PROBLEMS BEFORE SHER SHAH; NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER; CONQUEST OF MALWA (1542-1543); SETTLEMENT OF MALWA; RANTHAMBHOR CAPTURED (1542); RAISIN OCCUPIED (1542); CONQUEST OF BHUTANA (1544); CONQUEST OF KALINJAR (1544); ESTIMATE OF SHER SHAH; CORONATION OF ISLAM SHAH; RELATIONS WITH ADIL KHAN; ISLAM SHAH STAMPS OUT DISAFFECTION; THE MIYAZI REVOLT (1547-1552); RELATIONS WITH SHUJAAT KHAN (1547-1548); KHAWAS KHAN MURDERED; ATTEMPTS ON THE LIFE OF THE SULTAN; RELATIONS WITH THE MUGHALS; DEATH OF ISLAM (1553); AN ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY; SUCCESSORS OF ISLAM SHAH; CAUSES OF THE DOWNFALL OF THE SUR DYNASTY; IMPORTANCE OF THE SURS IN THE HISTORY OF INDIA; AIMS AND IDEALS; CENTRAL GOVERNMENT; PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT; SPECIAL FEATURES OF SARKAR AND PARGANA; MEASURES OF LAND-REFORM; AN ESTIMATE OF SHER SHAH'S LAND-REVENUE POLICY; ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE; EDUCATION; PUBLIC CHARITIES; ROADS AND SARAI; MILITARY ORGANISATION; DEFECTS OF THE SUR ARMY: SHER SHAH AND THE NOBILITY; ISLAM SHAH AND THE NOBILITY; OTHER MEASURES OF ISLAM SHAH; AN ESTIMATE OF AFGHAN INSTITUTIONS.

CHAPTER IV. AKBAR UNDER TUTELAGE—THE REGENCY OF BAIRAM KHAN ...

84

BIRTH OF AKBAR; DATE OF BIRTH; HUMAYUN

CELEBRATES THE BIRTH; EARLY YEARS OF AKBAR; EDUCATION; ENTRY INTO PUBLIC LIFE; PROBLEMS BEFORE AKBAR : KABUL, QANDAHAR AND BADA KHSHAN; AFGHAN RIVALS; RAJPUTS; APPOINTMENT OF THE REGENT; FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES; POSITION AND PROSPECTS; CHARACTER AND PERSONALITY OF BAIRAM KHAN; HEMU OCCUPIES DELHI AND AGRA; TARDI BEG EXECUTED; SECOND BATTLE OF PANIPAT (NOV. 5, 1556); CAUSES OF HEMU'S DEFEAT; END OF THE SURS; ANNEXATION AND EXPANSION (1556-1560): MANKOT; SAMBHAL, LUCKNOW, JAUNPUR; MEWAT; GWALIOR; AJMER; CAUSES OF BAIRAM'S DOWNFALL : DISSATISFACTION OF THE EMPEROR; MISCHIEVOUS ROLE OF ATQAKHAIL; DISREGARD OF SUNNI SENTIMENTS; IRANI-TURANI TANGLE; MILITARY FAILURES; DISMISSAL OF BAIRAM KHAN; REBELLION AND DEATH; ESTIMATE OF HIS WORK.

CHAPTER VI. MUGHAL IMPERIALISM ... 100

POLITICAL SITUATION OF INDIA IN 1560; IMPERIALIST AIMS OF AKBAR AND HIS SUCCESSORS; STAGES OF TERRITORIAL EXPANSION; CAUSES OF COMPARATIVE LONGEVITY OF THE EMPIRE.

CHAPTER VI. RAJPUT POLICY OF THE MUGHALS ... 103

PRINCIPAL RAJPUT STATES; FAILURE OF THE POLICY OF THE SULTANS; RAJPUT POLICY OF BABAR AND HUMAYUN; SHAH TAHMASP'S ADVICE TO HUMAYUN; BACKGROUND OF AKBAR'S RAJPUT POLICY; ELEMENTS OF HIS POLICY : MATRIMONIAL ALLIANCES; PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES; RELATIONS WITH MEWAR; CAUSES OF INVASION; CONQUEST OF CHITOR (1567-1568); OCCUPATION OF RANTHAMBHOR (1569); EFFECTS OF THE DEFEAT OF THE RANAS OF MEWAR; MAHARANA PRATAP'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM (1576-1597); SUBMISSION OF MEWAR (1614); SUBSEQUENT RELATIONS WITH MARWAR; SUBMISSION OF MINOR STATES; THE KACHHWAHAS OF AMBER; SERVICES OF THE RAJPUTS TO THE EMPIRE.

CHAPTER VII. EXTERMINATION OF AFGHAN POWER ... 116

AFGHAN SUCCESSORS OF THE SURS; CONDITION ON THE EVE OF INVASION; ADHAM KHAN AND PIR MUHAMMAD INVADE MALWA (1560); RESTORATION OF BAZ BAHADUR (1562); RISINGS

AND DISTURBANCES; BENGAL, BIHAR AND ORISSA; DOWNFALL OF THE SURS AND FOUNDATION OF AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE IN THE EAST; THE SUR SULTANS OF BENGAL (1554-1564); THE KIRRANIS OF BENGAL AND BIHAR (1564-1576); AKBAR AND THE KIRRANIS; ACCESSION OF DAUD AND THE BEGINNING OF WAR; OCCUPATION OF BENGAL BY MUNIM KHAN (1574-1575); THE BATTLE OF MUGHALMARI AND TREATY WITH DAUD (1575); FRESH OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES AND DEATH OF DAUD (1576); EFFECTS OF THE WAR : CONQUEST OF ORISSA (1590-1592); CAUSES OF LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY BY AFGHANS; RAJ-PUT POLICY VS. AFGHAN POLICY.

CHAPTER VIII. CONQUEST OF GUJERAT ... 126

GUJERAT IN THE 16TH CENTURY; GUJERAT IN THE DAYS OF AKBAR; CAUSES OF AKBAR'S INVASION OF GUJERAT; ANNEXATION OF GUJERAT (1572-1573); SUPPRESSION OF THE MIRZAS; END OF THE RULING DYNASTY OF GUJERAT; TODAR MAL REORGANISES THE FINANCES OF GUJERAT; RESULTS OF THE ANNEXATION OF GUJERAT.

CHAPTER IX. CONSOLIDATION OF THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER ... 134

THE PROBLEM OF THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER; FAILURE OF THE POLICY OF THE SULTANS OF DELHI; ELEMENTS OF AKBAR'S POLICY; RELATIONS WITH KABUL; MIRZA HAKIM APPOINTED GOVERNOR; SULAIMAN'S DESIGNS AGAINST KABUL (1556-1564); HAKIM INVADES INDIA (1566-1567); HAKIM'S SECOND INVASION (1581); ANNEXATION OF KABUL (1585); RELATIONS WITH THE TRIBAL PEOPLE; REVOLT OF THE YUSUFZAIS (1585-1586); REVOLT OF THE RAUSHANIYAS; REBELLION BY BHAGU (1667); REVOLTS OF AKMAL AND KHUSHHAL KHAN; EFFECTS OF AFGHAN RISINGS; ANNEXATIONS ON THE NORTH-WEST; KASHMIR (1586); SINDH (1591); BALUCHISTAN AND MAKHRAN (1595); QANDAHAR (1595); RELATIONS WITH PERSIA; SHAH ABBAS REOCCUPIES QANDAHAR (1622); SHAHJAHAN SECURES QANDAHAR AGAIN (1638); PERMANENT LOSS OF QANDAHAR (1649); CHARACTER OF INDO-PERSIAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS; RELATIONS WITH BALKH AND BADAKHSHAN : UNDER BAPAR AND

HUMAYUN; UZBEGS SEIZE BADA-KHSHAN (1584); AKBAR AND ABDULLAH KHAN UZBEG (1571-1598); JAHANGIR'S RELATIONS WITH IMAM QULI AND NAZR MUHAMMAD; SHAHJAHAN AND NAZR MUHAMMAD; CONQUEST OF BALKH AND BADA-KHSHAN; A RESUME OF THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER POLICY.

CHAPTER X : CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN—LOCAL MUSLIM DYNASTIES ENDED.

152

STATES OF THE DECCAN; THE FARUQIS OF KHANDESH; FIRST CONTACT WITH THE TIMURIDS; AKBAR AND MUBARAK SHAH II; RAJA ALI KHAN SUBMITS TO AKBAR; THE NIZAMSHAHS OF AHMADNAGAR (1490-1636); BURHAN'S APPEAL TO BABAR AND HUMAYUN FOR HELP; AKBAR CLAIMS SUZERAINTY OVER NIZAMSHAH; BURHAN AT THE COURT OF AKBAR; FAILURE OF MISSIONS TO THE SOUTH (1591); PREPARATION FOR WAR; DISSENSIONS AND DISPUTED SUCCESSION; WAR AGAINST AHMADNAGAR (1595-1596); REVIVAL OF WAR (1597-1600); DISSENT IN KHANDESH; THE SIEGE OF ASIRGARH; THE FALL OF ASIRGARH (1601); RESULTS OF AKBAR'S POLICY; MALIK AMBAR'S COUNTER-OFFENSIVE; JAHANGIR'S EARLY FAILURES; KHURRAM SENT TO THE DECCAN; MALIK AMBAR'S COUNTER-OFFENSIVE OF 1620; SHAHJAHAN'S SECOND INVASION OF THE DECCAN (1621); THE ADILSHAHS OF BIJAPUR; AKBAR'S RELATIONS WITH THE ADILSHAH; JAHANGIR AND IBRAHIM ADILSHAH; THE QUTBSHAHS OF GOLKUNDA; RELATIONS WITH AKBAR AND JAHANGIR; REFLECTIONS ON THE DECCAN POLICY OF JAHANGIR; AIMS OF SHAHJAHAN; END OF THE NIZAMSHAHS; FIGHT AGAINST SHAHJI (1633-1636); RELATIONS WITH BIJAPUR UPTO THE TREATY OF 1636; THE TREATY OF 1636; TREATY WITH QUTBSHAH; THE FIRST VICEROYALTY OF AURANGZEB (1636-1644); SECOND VICEROYALTY OF AURANGZEB (1653-1657); AURANGZEB'S PLANS FOR CONQUEST; CAUSES OF WAR AGAINST GOLKUNDA; OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES; CONDITIONS IN BIJAPUR; AURANGZEB'S REPORT TO THE EMPEROR; WAR AGAINST BIJAPUR (1657); AN ESTIMATE OF THE DECCAN POLICY OF SHAHJAHAN; TIMES OF AURANGZEB; DUPLICITY OF BIJAPUR (1660-1665); JAY SINGH ATTACKS BIJAPUR (1665-1666); DECLINE OF

BIJAPUR (1666-1680); CAUSES OF DISSATISFACTION AGAINST BIJAPUR; INVASION OF BIJAPUR (1685-1686); ANNEXATION OF BIJAPUR; CAUSES OF INVASION OF GOLKUNDA; CAUSES OF SECOND INVASION OF GOLKUNDA; SIEGE OF GOLKUNDA; CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE FALL OF GOLKUNDA.

CHAPTER XI. CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN— WARS AGAINST THE MARATHAS

188

FORMER HINDU KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN; CONQUEST OF GONDWANA; MAHARASHTRA AND ITS PEOPLE; A COMMON LANGUAGE; RELIGIOUS REVIVAL; PLACE OF THE MARATHAS IN DECCAN POLITICS; THE BHONSLAS; SHAHJI BHONSLE (1594-1664); SHIVAJI (1627-1680); SHIVAJI'S EDUCATION AND TRAINING; SHIVAJI ACQUIRES FAME AND POPULARITY; AIMS OF SHIVAJI; EARLY SUCCESSES; A CHANGE IN THE POLICY OF SHIVAJI; RELATIONS WITH BIJAPUR; DEATH OF AFZAL KHAN; RELATIONS WITH THE MUGHAL EMPEROR; SHAYASTA KHAN (1660-1666); SACK OF SURAT (1664); RELATIONS WITH JAY SINGH (1665-1666); TREATY OF PURANDAR (1665); JOURNEY TO AGRA (1666); PEACE WITH THE EMPEROR (1668); REVIVAL OF WAR AGAINST THE EMPEROR (1670); SUCCESSES OF SHIVAJI (1670-1680); DEATH OF SHIVAJI (1680); CAUSES OF AURANGZEB'S FAILURE AGAINST SHIVAJI; EXPLOITATION OF THE RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL SENTIMENT; GEOGRAPHICAL FACTOR; THE MARATHA PEOPLE; PERSONALITY AND POLICY OF SHIVAJI; SCOUTS OF SHIVAJI; MUTUAL HOSTILITY AMONG SHIVAJI'S ADVERSARIES; PREOCCUPATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES OF AURANGZEB; DECADENCE OF THE ADILSHAH; QUTBSHAH'S ASSISTANCE; CORONATION OF SHIVAJI; SUCCESSORS OF SHIVAJI; AURANGZEB'S PLANS FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN; DEFEAT AND DEATH OF SHAMBHUJI (1689); CAPTURE OF RAYGARH (1689); CHHATRAPATI RAJARAM (1689-1700); TARABAI'S LEADERSHIP (1700-1708); ABORTIVE ATTEMPTS AT PEACE (1702-1706); EFFECT OF THE DECCAN POLICY OF THE MUGHALS.

CHAPTER XII. NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER POLICY—THE CONQUEST OF ASSAM

221

THE NORTH-EASTERN REGION; LAND AND PEO-

PLE; RELATIONS WITH THE SULTANS OF DELHI; AKBAR'S RELATIONS WITH KUCH BIHAR; JAHANGIR OCCUPIES KAMRUP (1612-1613); DECLINE IN THE POWER OF KUCH BIHAR; THE AHOMS OF ASSAM; WAR AGAINST THE AHOMS (1636-1639); THE PEACE OF 1639; RECRUDESCENCE OF WAR (1658); INVASION OF ASSAM (1662-1663); TERMS OF THE PEACE (1663); DEATH OF MIR JUMLA (1663); LOSS OF ASSAM AND KAMRUP; ANNEXATION OF CHITTAGONG (1665-1666); A RESUME OF EXPANSION OF THE EMPIRE.

CHAPTER XIII. THE FORCES OF DISINTEGRATION—THEIR NATURE AND INFLUENCE ... 230

DESIRE FOR LOCAL AUTONOMY; SHORTCOMINGS OF AN ALL-INDIA GOVERNMENT; INHERENT DEFECTS OF HEREDITARY DESPOTISMS; PERSONAL AMBITION *vs.* LOYALTY TO THE SOVEREIGN; DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE; INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS REFORMERS; THE PROBLEM OF SUCCESSION; FOREIGN INVASIONS; CONSEQUENCES OF DISINTEGRATION.

CHAPTER XIV. REBELLIONS OF JATS AND RAJPUTS ... 236

CAUSES OF DISAFFECTION; REVOLTS AGAINST JAHANGIR; REBELLION BY JUJHAR SINGH (1628-1636); REVOLT OF CHAMPAT RAY BUNDELA (1639-1642); CHHATRASAL; RATHORS RISE IN REVOLT; REBELLION IN MEWAR; DEFECTION OF AKBAR; AKBAR'S FLIGHT TO THE SOUTH; JAY SINGH COMES TO TERMS (1681); RATHORS TRIUMPH AND AJIT SINGH RECOGNISED AS MAHARAJA; RAJASTHAN ACQUIRES INDEPENDENCE; REBELLION OF THE JATS.

CHAPTER XV. RISE OF THE SIKHS ... 248

ORIGIN OF THE SIKHS; SUCCESSORS OF NANAK; GURU ARJUN (1581-1606); GURU HARGOVIND (1606-1645); GURU HARARAY (1645-1661); GURU HARKISHAN (1661-1664); GURU TEGH BAHADUR (1664-1676); CAUSES OF THE DEATH OF GURU TEGH BAHADUR; GURU GOVIND SINGH (1676-1708); GURU GOVIND SINGH'S RELATIONS WITH THE TIMURIDS; DEATH OF GOVIND SINGH AND ITS CONSEQUENCES; BANDA BAHADUR; FOUNDATION OF THE KHALSA.

CHAPTER XVI : WARS OF SUCCESSION AND THE PUPPET EMPERORS

258

ABSENCE OF ANY DEFINITE LAW; TIMURID PRACTICE; CAUSES OF THE REVOLT OF SALIM; BEGINNING OF THE REVOLT (1599); SALIM FORGIVEN (1603); CONSPIRACY AGAINST SALIM; KHUSRAU AT COURT; CAUSES OF REBELLION; REVOLT OF KHUSRAU (1606); KHUSRAU BLINDED (1607); DEATH OF KHUSRAU (1621); PARVEZ (1589-1626); KHURRAM (1592-1666); NURJAHAN; RIVALRY BETWEEN NURJAHAN AND SHAHJAHAN; REBELLION OF SHAHJAHAN (1622-1626); DEATH OF JAHANGIR AND SHAHJAHAN'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE; DARA SHIKOH (1615-1659); SHUJA (1616-1661) AURANGZEB (1618-1707); MURAD (1624-1661); CAUSES OF THE WAR OF SUCCESSION; SHAHJAHAN'S ILLNESS; SHAHJAHAN TRANSFERS POWER TO DARA; REBELLION BY SHUJA AND MURAD; MISTAKES OF DARA; DEFEAT OF SHUJA AND HIS RETREAT TO BENGAL; MOVEMENTS OF MURAD; AURANGZEB'S WISE MEASURES; THE BATTLE OF DHARMAT; AURANGZEB'S LETTER TO THE EMPEROR; THE BATTLE OF SAMUGGARH (MAY 1658); OCCUPATION OF AGRA AND IMPRISONMENT OF SHAHJAHAN; MURAD EXECUTED (1661); DEATH OF DARA (1659); DEFEAT AND DEATH OF SHUJA (1661); DEATH OF SULAIMAN SHIKOH (1662); EFFECTS OF THE WAR; MUHAMMAD SULTAN (1639-1676); MUHAMMAD MU-AZZAM (1643-1712); MUHAMMAD AZAM (1653-1707); AKBAR (1657-1704); KAM BAKHSH (1667-1709); THE WILL OF AURANGZEB; THE BATTLE OF JAJAN AND DEATH OF AZAM (JUNE 1707); DEFEAT AND DEATH OF KAM BAKHSH (JAN. 1709) BAHADUR SHAH I (1707-1712); JAHANDAR SHAH (1712-1713); REBELLION BY FARRUKHSIYAR (APRIL 1712); ACCESSION OF FARRUKHSIYAR (JAN. 1713); EARLY MEASURES OF FARRUKHSIYAR; DECLINE IN THE POWER AND POSITION OF THE EMPEROR; FARRUKHSIYAR AND THE SAYYAD BROTHERS; DEPOSITION AND DEATH OF FARRUKHSIYAR (1719); RAFI UD-DARJAT, RAFI-UD-DAULA AND NEKUSIYAR (1719); MUHAMMAD SHAH (1719-1748); AHMAD SHAH (1748-1754); ALAMGIR II (1754-1759); SHAH ALAM (1759-1806).

CHAPTER XVII : MARATHA EXPANSION UNDER THE PESHWAS

297

IMPERMANENCE OF AURANGZEB'S CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN; CHHATRAPATI SHAHU (1708-1749);

WAR AGAINST TARABAI (1707); CORONATION OF SHAHU (JAN. 1708); CONQUEST OF PANHALA (1708); RELATIONS BETWEEN SHAHU AND TARABAI (1708-1714); RELATIONS BETWEEN SHAHU AND BALAJI VISHWANATH; BALAJI VISHWANATH (1713-1720); THE POSITION OF SHAHU; THE HOUSE OF KOLHAPUR; THE MUGHAL VICEROYS; OTHER STATES IN THE DECCAN; THE MUGHAL EMPEROR; ACHIEVEMENTS OF BALAJI; BALAJI'S DIPLOMATIC SUCCESS; TERMS OF THE TREATY (1718); BALAJI'S TRIP TO THE NORTH (1718-1719); OTHER MEASURES ADOPTED BY BALAJI; AN ESTIMATE OF THE WORK OF BALAJI VISHWANATH; BAJIRAO (1720-1740); PROBLEMS BEFORE BAJIRAO; AIMS OF BAJIRAO; RELATIONS BETWEEN BAJIRAO AND SHAHU; PRINCIPAL LIEUTENANTS OF BAJIRAO; SHAHU'S RELATIONS WITH NIZAM-UL-MULK; VICTORY AT PALKHED; RELATIONS WITH SHAMBHUJI; BAJIRAO DECIDES TO INVADE THE NORTH; CONDITION OF MALWA; SHAHU CONCURS WITH BAJIRAO; THE BATTLE OF AMJHERA (1728); TREATY WITH CHHATRASAL (1729); PEACE PROPOSALS OF SINGH (1726-1730); ACCESSION OF STRENGTH TO THE PESHWA (1728-1736); THE BATTLE OF BHOPAL (DEC. 1737); OTHER SUCCESSES IN THE NORTH; OCCUPATION OF GUJERAT; WARS IN THE KONKAN; DEATH OF BAJIRAO; AN ESTIMATE OF HIS WORK; BALAJI BAJIRAO (1740-1761); BALAJI'S RELATIONS WITH THE CHHATRAPATI; CONSTITUTIONAL PREEMINENCE OF THE PESHWAS; MARATHA EXPANSION; BENGAL, BIHAR AND ORISSA (1741-1751); RELATIONS WITH THE NIZAM (1740-1760); SUBJUGATION OF RAJPUTANA AND BUNDELKHAND; RELATIONS WITH THE EMPEROR; CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER XVIII : REBELLIONS IN PROVINCES

331

CAUSES OF REBELLION; CAUSES OF THE SUCCESS OR FAILURE OF REVOLTS; REVOLTS AGAINST AKBAR; REBELLION OF MAHABAT KHAN (1626); REVOLT OF KHAN-I-JAHAN LODI (1629-1631); THE REIGN OF AURANGZEB; REVOLTS OF THE 18TH CENTURY; NIZAM BECOMES INDEPENDENT (1724); THE NAWABS OF BENGAL; AWADH; THE BANGASHES OF FARRUKHABAD; THE ROHILLAS; ALI MUHAMMAD KHAN ROHILLA; HAFIZ RAHMAT KHAN; CONCLUSIONS.

CHAPTER XIX : FOREIGN INVASIONS

...

345

CONDITION OF THE EMPIRE ON THE EVE OF NADIR SHAH'S INVASION; RISE OF NADIR SHAH;

CAUSES OF INVADING INDIA; INVASION BY NADIRSHAH (1738-1739); THE BATTLE OF KARNAL; THE PROBLEM OF PEACE; SAADAT'S TREASON; EMPEROR AND NIZAM-UL-MULK DETAINED BY NADIR SHAH; NADIR SHAH'S RETREAT TO PERSIA; RESULTS OF THE INVASION; AHMAD SHAH ABDALI; OCCUPIES GHAZNI, KABUL AND PESHAWAR; INVASION OF INDIA (1743); SECOND INVASION (1749-1750); THIRD INVASION (1751-1753); FOURTH INVASION (1756-1759); FIFTH AND THE LAST INVASION; DEATH OF DATTAJI (JAN. 1760); SADASHIVA RAO BHAU COMES TO THE NORTH (1760); PROPOSALS FOR PEACE; THE THIRD BATTLE OF PANIPAT (JAN. 1761) CAUSES OF THE SUCCESS OF ABDALI; IMPORTANCE OF THE BATTLE.

CHAPTER XX : CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ... 359

POLITICAL IDEALS; (i) SOVEREIGNTY; (ii) LUST FOR IMPERIALISM; (iii) DYNASTIC LOYALTIES; (iv) RELIGIOUS TOLERATION; CULTURAL PROGRESS; THE MONARCH; PREROGATIVES OF THE SOVEREIGN; DAILY ROUTINE OF THE EMPEROR; EMPEROR AKBAR (1556-1605); SHAHJAHAN (1628-1658); AURANGZEB (1658-1707); MAHARANA PRATAP (1572-1597); SHIVAJI (1674-1680); COMPARATIVE ESTIMATE; ADVISERS OF THE SOVEREIGN; STATUS AND TENURE OF MINISTERS; VAKIL OR REGENT; WAZIR OR THE HIGH DIWAN; FINANCIAL POWERS; OTHER DUTIES OF THE DIWAN-I-ALA; PRINCIPAL ASSISTANTS OF THE WAZIR; KHAN-I-SAMAN; MIR BAKHSHI; SADR-I-JAHAN OR SADR-US-SUDUR; MIR-I-ATISH; DAROGHA-I-DAKCHAUKI; MIR MUNSHI; THE CENTRAL SECRETARIAT; CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF SHIVAJI; MUGHAL AND MARATHA INSTITUTIONS COMPARED; SOME NOTABLE MINISTERS; DEFECTS AND DRAWBACKS.

CHAPTER XXI PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION ... 389

FORMATION OF PROVINCES; PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE PROVINCE; DUTIES OF THE SUBADAR; THE PROVINCIAL DIWAN; THE PROVINCIAL BAKHSHI; ADMINISTRATION OF THE SARKAR; ADMINISTRATION OF THE PARGANA; VILLAGE ORGANISATION; RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CENTRE AND THE PROVINCES; PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNDER THE MARATHAS; MUGHAL

MARATHA INSTITUTIONS COMPARED; SOME NOTABLE GOVERNORS;

CHAPTER XXII : MILITARY ORGANISATION ... 399

NEED FOR A STRONG ARMY; PAUCITY OF SPECIFIC DETAILS; DIVISIONS OF THE ARMY; CAVALRY; ELEPHANTRY; INFANTRY; ARTILLERY; NAVY; MANSABDARI TROOPS; ZAT AND SAWAR; ACTUAL STRENGTH OF CONTINGENTS; THE PROBABLE POSITION; SALARIES OF MANSABDARS; DEFECTS OF MANSABDARS AND STEPS TAKEN TO ERADICATE THEM; APPOINTMENT, TENURE AND SALARY OF TROOPS; AHADIS; STRENGTH OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY; THE NAVY; DISTRIBUTION OF THE ARMY; IMPORTANCE OF FORTS; WEAKNESSES IN THE DEFENCE ORGANISATION OF THE EMPIRE; MILITARY ORGANISATION OF SHIVAJI; STRENGTH OF HIS ARMY; INTERNAL ORGANISATION OF THE CAVALRY; OFFICERS OF THE INFANTRY; SCOUTS AND SPIES; EMOLUMENTS; DISCIPLINE, CONTROL AND REWARDS; MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND STORES; THE MARATHA NAVY; THE ARMY UNDER THE PESHWA; FOREIGN ELEMENT IN INDIAN ARMIES.

CHAPTER XXIII : FINANCE AND REVENUE ... 416

ORGANISATION OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT; REVENUES OF THE STATE; SOURCES OF REVENUE; HEADS OF EXPENDITURE; LAND REVENUE POLICY; CHIEF PROBLEMS; NATURE OF AKBAR'S REFORMS; REFORMS OF AKBAR; ILAHI YARD AND THE NEW JARIB; THE ILAHI ERA (1584); CLASSIFICATION OF LAND; SETTLEMENT OF POLAJ LAND; EARLIER EXPERIMENTS; DAHSALA OR THE ZABTI SYSTEM; BENEFITS FROM DAHSALA SYSTEM; IMPORTANCE OF THE DAHSALA SYSTEM; AREA UNDER THE DAHSALA SYSTEM; ASSIGNMENTS OF LAND; VASSAL CHIEFS AND RAJAS; HOLDERS OF SAYURGHALS; OTHER CONCESSIONS TO PEASANTS; CHANGES UNDER JAHANGIR; CHANGES UNDER SHAHJAHAN; AURANGZEB'S POLICY; REFORM OF MALIK AMBAR; REFORMS OF MURSHID QULI; LAND SETTLEMENT UNDER SHIVAJI, AGENCIES FOR COLLECTION; CHAUTH AND SARDESHMUKHI, CHANGES UNDER THE PESHWAS; CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER XXIV : ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE ... 440

LAW; ISLAMIC LAW; CLASSIFICATION OF COURTS

IN MEDIEVAL INDIA; CANON LAW COURTS; REVENUE COURTS; CRIMINAL COURTS; CIVIL COURTS; SPECIAL FEATURES; LOVE OF JUSTICE AMONG INDIAN RULERS; REFORMS OF AURANGZEB; IAPSES OF QAZIS; OTHER DEFECTS IN THE JUDICIAL MACHINERY; JAILS; PUNISHMENTS.

CHAPTER XXV : RELIGIONS POLICY ... 448

RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF INDIA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 16TH CENTURY; THE TIMURID TRADITION; RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF BABAR AND HUMAYUN; AKBAR; EARLIER VIEWS AND AIMS OF AKBAR; DEBATES; SPIRITUAL PRECEPTORS OF AKBAR; RELIGIOUS POLICY OF AKBAR; THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF THE MAHZAR (1579); FOUNDATION OF THE DIN-I-ILAH (1581); PRINCIPLES OF DIN-I-ILAH; GRADES OF DISCIPLES; RESULTS OF AKBAR'S POLICY, THE SO-CALLED ANTI-ISLAMIC MEASURES; A REVIEW OF THE ABOVE CHARGES; RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF JAHANGIR; RELIGIOUS POLICY OF JAHANGIR; SHAH JAHAN; RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF INDIA AT THE TIME OF AURANGZEB; RELIGIOUS VIEWS OF AURANGZEB; SUPPRESSION OF UN-ISLAMIC PRACTICES; REGULATIONS AGAINST THE HINDUS; DESTRUCTION OF HINDU TEMPLES; MEASURES TO SECURE CONVERSIONS TO ISLAM.

CHAPTER XXVI : SOCIETY AND RELIGION ... 473

COURT LIFE; ITS URBAN CHARACTER; FOREIGN INFLUENCE; WEALTH AND MAGNIFICENCE; LUXURY AND SENSUALITY; MISUSE OF PUBLIC FUNDS; CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT; THE NOBILITY; THE MIDDLE CLASS; POSITION OF WOMEN; DIETARY HABITS; MIXED MARRIAGES; RURAL LIFE; ACCENTUATION OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR; VAISHNAVA PREACHERS; EVIL CONSEQUENCES OF VAISHNAVA TEACHINGS; SUFI SAINTS; OTHER SECTS; HINDU MUSLIM RELATIONS; INADEQUACY OF MEDIEVAL RELIGIONS REFORM MOVEMENTS.

CHAPTER XXVII : ECONOMIC LIFE ... 490

ECONOMIC GROUPS; WEIGHTS AND COINS; INCOME OF HIGHER GROUPS; SECOND GRADE OFFICERS OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE; LOWER GRADE GOVERNMENT SERVANTS; THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS; TRADE AND INDUSTRY; SUGAR AND SUGAR CANDY; OPIUM AND INDIGO; EARTHEN-

WARE; WOOD-WORK; IRON INDUSTRY; MANUFACTURE OF METAL GOODS; LUXURY GOODS; WINE AND TODDY; LEATHER INDUSTRY; SILK INDUSTRY; WOOLLEN INDUSTRY; COTTON INDUSTRY; INCOME OF CRAFTSMEN; LABOUR; MERCHANTS AND TRADERS; FOREIGN TRADE; CONDITION OF THE PEASANTRY; FAMINES AND EPIDEMICS; MISTAKES OF THE GOVERNMENT.

CHAPTER XXVIII : ART AND LITERATURE ... 504

PERSIAN LITERATURE; TRANSLATIONS; POETRY; HISTORY; LETTERS AND AUTOBIOGRAPHIES; OTHER PROSE WORKS; INDIAN LANGUAGES; HINDI LITERATURE; URDU LITERATURE; BENGALI LITERATURE; BOOK-CRAFT; PAINTING; ARCHITECTURE; UNDER AKBAR; UNDER JAHANGIR; UNDER SHAHJAHAN; OTHER BUILDINGS OF THE LATER MEDIEVAL AGE; MUSIC; CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF THE AGE.

CHAPTER XXIX : CONCLUSION ... 519
MAPS

1	Facing page	38
2	Facing page	61
3	Facing page	100
4	Facing page	108
5	Facing page	136
6	Facing page	152
7	Facing page	188
8	Facing page	228
9	Facing page	296
<i>Index</i>	Facing page	523

R
H

CHAPTER I

TIMUR AND BABAR

Foreign invasions were one of the chief causes of the disintegration of the Sultanate of Delhi in the early medieval age. Of these, one was led by Timur. Earlier, many a Mongol leader had crossed the north-western frontier to attack the Sultanate of Delhi, but had singly failed to found a Mongol empire, and the Sultanate of Delhi survived their attacks. But, within less than a hundred years of Timur's invasion of India, one of his descendants supplanted the Sultanate and founded a new dynasty in India. For this reason Timur has acquired a place of pre-eminence among the 13th and 14th century invaders from the north-west.

Timur's father was head of the Barlas Turks, but was Timur really a Turk? To this no satisfactory answer is possible because the evidence bearing on it is of a controversial nature. It is said that in the land of the Turks some Mongol tribes had settled down, intermarried and had adopted the language and customs of the land of their adoption. They were thus so thoroughly Turkicised that they described themselves as Turks. The ancestors of Timur were thus really Barlas Mongols who miscalled themselves Barlas Turks. Mawarunnahr, the homeland of the Barlas Turks was conquered and annexed by Chaghez; but at the time of the division of the empire among his sons he assigned Mawarunnahr to his son Chaghtai. Since then the Turks resident in this territory came to be known as Chaghtai Turks. Thus the father of Timur was described both as a Barlas Turk as well as a Chaghtai. The biographers of Timur relate a story according to which the ancestors of Timur were not only Mongols but that they also held high-offices under them. It is said that Kabul and Kajuli were two brothers. One of the descendants of Kabul was Chaghez who appointed Karachar a descendant of Kajuli as the prime minister of his son Chaghtai. Timur was fifth in descent from Karachar. Thus, according to this version Timur was really a Mongol and connected both with the Turks and the Mongols.

Timur was born in 1336 at Kesh near Samarqand. By this time, the great Chaghezkhaniid empire had been divided into a number of principalities ruled by his descendants, and even within these petty principalities, forces of disintegration were gaining ground day by day undermining the authority of

Timur's public
career

the rulers and creating excellent ground and opportunity for the conquests of Timur.

Timur came into intimate contact with four Mongol kingdoms *viz.* (1) Kipchak, where the descendants of Juji the eldest son of Changez held sway, (2) Mawarunnahr, ruled by a descendant of Chaghtai, the land where Timur was born (3) Mughalistan, held by the main branch of Chaghtai's descendants, and (4) the land of the Ilkhans which at one time extended as far as Mesopotamia in the west.

Being the son of a chieftain of Mawarunnahr, Timur began his career as a dependent of the Chaghtai's but he could not pull on well with his master. This initiated a life of struggle and suffering, but by 1369 Timur had impressed his contemporaries so well that most of the chiefs of Mawarunnahr accepted his leadership. He now seized Samarqand and with it as his headquarters started ruling over the whole of Mawarunnahr. He did not dare to set aside the Changezkhaniids altogether, but for convenience replaced the local Chaghtai ruler with Suyurghatamish, a descendant of Oghtai whom he installed as a puppet and exercised all powers in his name. Till the very end of his life Timur maintained some one or the other as a puppet Khan while retaining the substance of power constantly in his own hands. Thus he was technically never a full-fledged sovereign but a mere prime minister.

About this time Kipchak was passing through a civil war and the nobles there had become defiant of the central power championing the cause of rival candidates to secure greater privileges to themselves. These rival candidates sought the aid of Timur, thus Tukhtamish, Timur Qutlugh and Kaurchik acquired ascendancy there thanks to Timur's assistance. But each one of them later turned against his benefactor and made war against him. Timur also came in conflict with the Chaghtais of Mughalistan whose ruler Khizr Khwaja finally conciliated Timur by entering into a matrimonial alliance, offering his daughter in marriage to him. Having consolidated his power in Mawarunnahr, he sent his armies towards the south and west overrunning all lands upto Mesopotamia thus sapping the foundations of the power of the Ilkhans of Persia. He then decided to invade India but because of the opposition of his Begs he could not annex Indian territory to his empire or appoint his own governors to rule over it. He, however, bestowed the dignity of his name to one of the Indian nobles whom he formally proclaimed as his deputy in a part of the Punjab. The deputy thus appointed introduced Timur's name in the *Khutba*, but for the rest he was the autonomous prince depending on his own resources for defence or extension of his authority. Timur later earned great fame as one of the greatest conquerors of Asia and Europe and his descendants continued to rule over most of western and central Asia.

The north-western region of India too recognized their constitutional suzerainty upto 1421. Thus Timur could be said to have been directly connected with the foundation of his dynasty in India.

After Timur's death, his empire was divided among his sons. Samarqand was ruled by Shah Rukh while western Asia passed into the hands of Miran Shah who made Tabriz, the seat of his Government. The eldest son of Miran Shah was at Samarqand; he at the time of his death entrusted the care of his son Abu Said to Ulugh Beg Mirza, the son of Shah Rukh. For some time, the relations between Abu Said and Ulugh Beg were very cordial, but when Ulugh Beg's sons turned rebellious, Abu Said also took part in the scramble for power and for a time captured Samarqand. He was later deposed and thrown into prison while Samarqand passed under the control of Ulugh Beg's son who murdered his father to capture the throne. Abu Said managed to escape from prison and with the assistance of Abul Khair (grandfather of the famous Shaibani Khan) an Uzbek leader of Kipchak, captured Samarqand again and consolidated his hold over the whole of Mawarunnahr. He loved to stay at Herat and planned to reconquer the lands over which his grandfather Miran Shah had held sway. Just then, Isan Bugha, the Tatar ruler of Mughalistan started raiding and devastating Samarqand. To put an end to this trouble, Abu Said decided to support Yunas Khan, an elder brother of Isan Bugha as a rival against him for the throne of Mughalistan. He invited Yunas Khan to Herat, proclaimed him as the Khan of Mughalistan and promised to assist him. In return Yunas recognized the Timurids as the rightful sovereigns of Mawarunnahr so that Abu Said and his descendants could now dispense with puppet 'Khans' and exercise all the powers and privileges of an independent ruler. This was no concession to Abu Said or a sacrifice on the part of the Mongols. It only recognised the *de facto* sovereignty of Timurids and made it *de jure* as well. As a result of this arrangement, Isan Bugha and Yunas Khan got involved in a civil war leaving Abu Said at peace in his own territory.

Taking advantage of this, Abu Said carried forward his schemes of conquests towards the south and the west so that when he died his sons inherited a large empire. In the division, Sultan Ahmad Mirza secured Samarqand and Bokhara, Mahmud Mirza got Badakhshan, Ulugh Beg Kabul and Ghazni while Farghana fell to the share of Umar Shaikh Mirza. Another Timurid prince Mirza Husain Baiqara held Khorasan and ruled over it from Herat. Yunas Khan maintained friendly relations with all of them and offered to each Ahmad, Mahmud and Umar Shaikh the hand of one of his daughters in marriage.

Thus the empire of the Timurids once more touched the north-western frontier of India. While Bahlul was busy at Delhi

deposing a descendant of Timur's governor in India, his own ancestral land was being conquered and annexed by Abu Said. And during the reign of Bahlul's son, Babar a grandson of Abu Said and the son of Mirza Umar Shaikh established his authority over Kabul and Ghazni.

Babar was born in 1483 and inherited the qualities of the Turks from his father and of the Mongols from his mother. When he was a mere lad of eleven, he succeeded Zahiruddin Muham- his father on the throne of Farghana and mad Babar in India during the next ten years he kept up a constant battle against internal disaffection and foreign danger to retain possession over Farghana and to secure the crown of Samarqand. Finally, the ascendancy of Shaibani Khan, a grandson of his grandfather's ally Abul Khair obliged him to leave Farghana and Samarqand and seek his fortune in Afghanistan. There he seized Kabul and Ghazni from the Arghuns in 1504. In his Memoirs—a highly interesting and faithful record of his career and character, Babar writes that since 1504 he had constantly been intent on the conquest of India but had not been able to pay due attention to it because of the plots of his brothers, opposition by the Begs and problems of internal security. But just as internal divisions among the Mongols had helped Timur to establish his supremacy over Central Asia, similarly factitious divisions among the Afghans facilitated the foundation of Babar's dominion in India.*

It was at the age of 21 that Babar had secured a new kingdom after losing his patrimony. He had already passed through many vicissitudes of life and had acquired wide experience of military strategy and tactics of the Uzbegs, Mongols and the Timurid Mirzas. The next 21 years of his life he spent in consolidating his power in Afghanistan, annexing Qandahar, strengthening and reinforcing his artillery by securing the services of Ustad Ali and Mustafa and watching the political developments in India. It was during this period that he was invited by Alam Khan, Daulat Khan and Rana Sangram Singh to invade India. In 1525, Babar was convinced that the time for the conquest of India was ripe and he promptly started invasion. It did not take him long to occupy the major towns and forts in the Punjab, which done, he proceeded towards Delhi and halted at Panipat, where Ibrahim Lodi was already awaiting his arrival. The fateful battle was fought on April 20, 1526 in which Ibrahim was worsted and killed. This not only added to the glory of Babar but made the foundation of his empire in Northern India a practical proposition. What Timur had begun in 1398 was carried to a decisive stage of fruition more than 125 years later. It is a strange paradox of history that the dynasty thus implanted by Babar

* For details of Babar's invasions of India and the collapse of Lodi power, see my *Early Medieval India*, Chapter 13.

came to be called what he greatly detested and despised. Babar called himself a Timurid and a Chaghtai but never a Mughal. Posterity, however, called his dynasty Mughal, mainly because he was confused with the line of Mongol invaders of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Soon after the battle of Panipat, both Delhi and Agra were occupied. There was no question of placing Alam Khan on the throne because he had deserted to the enemy. Daulat Khan had been disgraced as a mean rebel and had died so that there was no commitment for the Punjab to anybody. The treachery and death of Babar's former Afghan allies facilitated his task very much and he safely appropriated to himself the entire conquered Afghan territory without any feeling of guilt or breach of faith. Rana Sanga could have claimed a share but he was idling away his time so that there was no cause for worry from that quarter. Consequently on April 27, 1526 Babar's name was included in the *Khutba* at Delhi and he was proclaimed as the ruler of the land under the style of Zahiruddin Muhammad Babar. Humayun captured Agra, and there too the authority of the new Padshah was recognized. Thus both the old as well as the new capital passed into the hands of Babar. So that, according to the custom of the day, he could regard himself as the master of the entire Lodi possessions.

But he was soon to realize that a lot of fighting was still to be done before the Afghan Empire could be finally ended. The adjoining province of Mewat was held by Hasan Khan. Qasim Khan held Sambhal, Nizam Khan Bayana, Tatar Khan Gwalior, Alam Khan Kalpi; Nasir Khan Nuhani, and Muhammad Farmuli and Maaruf Farmuli in the east were still keeping remnants of Afghan power intact. Bihar had an independent Afghan Sultanate which could easily become a rallying ground for the Afghan fugitives. Mahmud, the younger brother of the late Lodi Sultan was still alive and trying to resuscitate the Lodi empire under his leadership. At Agra, the mother of Ibrahim had been reconciled to Babar. But that was only feigned, for no mother could really forgive the murder of her son and she too secretly planned how she could avenge herself by encompassing the death of Babar. Thus there were powerful remnants of Afghan power both within and without the capital, and Mahmud Lodi or Muhammad Shah Nuhani could easily make an effort to drive the Timurids by uniting these various elements under their banner.

Babar took adequate measures to meet the situation. He conferred on Dilawar Khan the son of Daulat Khan the title of *Khani-i-Khanan* and treated him with the same conciliation and generosity and regard as any body else. This conquest had a very wholesome effect on the waverrers among the Afghan nobility. They were convinced that if they

submitted to Babar, they too would receive a similar treatment. Many of them, therefore, like Shaikh Bayazid, Muhammad Khan Nuhani and their friends enrolled themselves as the followers of Babar who graciously took them in his service and conferred on them *jagirs* proportionate to their strength and importance. At the same time, he planned further conquests as well. He divided unsubdued territory among his captains and ordered them to conquer their allotted portions and to hold them in *jagir*. Thus the captains of war acquired a personal interest in the extension of Babar's authority and each tried to outdo the other. The result was that Sambhal, Etawah, Kanauj, Dholpur, Rapri, Jaunpur, Ghazipur and Kalpi rapidly passed into Babar's hand and the local Afghan leaders were either killed or driven away. The entire region was formed into a viceroyalty and placed under Junaid Barlas who was empowered to adopt all possible measures for a complete subjugation of the Afghans. Bayana and Gwalior were also occupied. The Afghans were thus forced to fall back towards the south and the east. Some of them fled to Rana Sanga and incited him against Babar. The Rana himself could not have liked such a rapid advance of the invader so deep towards the south and the east. He interpreted it as a breach of faith against the treaty of partition agreed between him and Babar. He looked upon Kalpi, Bayana, Agra and Dholpur as falling within his sphere of influence so that Babar's occupation of them was regarded as hostile encroachment. He therefore started marshalling his troops when Hasan Khan Mewati and Mahmud Lodi also joined him at the head of their followers.

The joint army of the Rajputs and the Afghans now marched against Babar intent on capturing Bayana and Agra. When the Chaghtais heard of this they were greatly dismayed. An astrologer's prediction about the outcome of the contest further dispirited them. But Babar did not lose faith in his star. He assembled his soldiers and spoke to them with great fervour and rhetorical effect, raised the slogan of *Jehad* and announced with dramatic effect his vow to give up wine. His impassioned appeal to do or die in the service of Allah went home and the assembly answered with one voice to follow him whole-heartedly. This was just the time when Muhammad Shah Nuhani should have created a powerful diversion in the east but he had no interest in the revival of Lodi power. Hence he remained satisfied with the enjoyment of his local independence. This proved most beneficial to Babar who concentrated all his energy against Rana Sanga.

The rival forces met on the battle-field of Khanua. The Chaghtais were greatly outnumbered but the Indian army was finally defeated by the use of the same tactics as had been em-

ployed at Panipat. Superior generalship, better arms and more effective strategy brought success to Babar. But here the resistance had been much fiercer than at Panipat. In the initial encounters the Rajputs had even forced the enemy to fall back—but Babar stood his ground bravely. The reserve was thrown in to buttress all weak points so that the Rajput advance was halted. Then they were simultaneously subjected to a withering fire by the artillery and matchlockmen while the mounted archers wheeled round to make the usual *tulughma* charges. Rana Sanga's men performed deeds of great valour and heroism and it was doubtful which way victory would finally lean. But in the hour of crisis, the Rana was wounded and became unconscious. An effort was made to conceal the fact by placing a double in nominal command. But the absence of the Rana was soon discovered and demoralised Indian resistance leading to their defeat. This collapse came as a great shock to the power of the Rajputs and they could make no attempt to rally their forces for a counter-offensive. The position of Babar as the master of Hindustan was now assured. As Rushbrook Williams has said, "Fighting there is, and fighting in plenty, to be done; but fighting for the extension of his power. . . It is never fighting for his throne."

Rana Sanga did not long survive the ~~consequences~~ of this defeat and after his death, the Rajput confederacy soon began to fall asunder.

Babar rounded off his southern frontier by leading an army against Medini Rai of Rai (1528)

Chandari, one of the powerful vassals of the Rana. Babar's proposal to Medini Rai that he should enter his service and accept Shamsabad in exchange for Chandari had been rejected. This was made the excuse for an attack on the fort. Medini Rai put up a bold resistance but he could not hope to succeed where Rana Sanga had failed. The fort was captured and according to Yadgar many Rajput ladies were captured before they could burn themselves according to their fearful rite of *Jauhar*. Among the captives were two daughters of Medini Rai who were given in marriage to Kamran and Humayun. In order to secure the goodwill of Indian Muslims, Babar assigned Chandari to Ahmad Shah the grandson of Sultan Nasiruddin of Malwa. The assignee agreeing to pay a revenue of fifty lakhs to the Imperial treasury.

After the defeat of Medini Rai, Babar had no trouble from the side of the Rajputs. Bikramajit, second son of Rana Sanga, had even surrendered the fort of Ranthambhor and accepted Shamsabad in exchange.

But the Afghans could not be cowed down so easily. Babar now concentrated his power in the region where the Afghans had held sway for the last three quarters of a century. There were many leaders among them who refused to submit to him. Instead they wanted to do all they could to

drive him out and to restore the power of the Afghans at Delhi and Agra. The most irrepressible were the Farmulis and the Nuhani, particularly Biban, Bayazid and Maaruf Farmuli and Nasir Khan Nuhani. They never sincerely submitted to Babar and rose in rebellion repeatedly. They had hoped for much from the united effort of the Rajputs and the Afghans but the disaster at Khanua had finally closed that avenue of hope. Now they pegged their hopes round Mahmud Lodi and even Muhammad Shah Nuhani. But as the sequel would show none of them was equal to the task of organising a successful counter-offensive. The Afghans learnt this bitter truth only in the reign of Humayun when they finally gave up all thought of reviving the power of the Lodis and reconciled themselves to the end of the first Afghan empire for good.

In the meantime, they kept alive the fire of resistance in the east. When they learnt of Babar's march against Chanderi they rose in revolt in Awadh and captured Shamsabad and Kanauj. They had also hoped to capture Agra with the assistance of the Afghan ruler of Bihar. But the latter was under the influence of Sher Khan who advised him to keep away from this struggle. Babar did not take long to capture Chanderi not even a whole day. Hence, he rapidly marched against the Farmuli rebels of Awadh. On hearing of Babar's approach the Afghans crossed to the other bank of the Ganges but Babar improvised a bridge and crossing the river in force delivered such a sharp blow to the rebels that they were scattered in all directions. Babar pursued them upto Chausa and Buxar which lay within the territory of the Nuhani Sultan, who had maintained a cautious neutrality.

Sher Khan was one of the subordinates of Sultan Muhammad Shah Nuhani who had quarrelled with his master in 1527 and entered the service of Babar, but had deserted the camp on hearing of trouble in the east. It was he who had kept the Nuhani Sultan out of the fray; also, it was on his advice that on the death of Sultan Muhammad Shah, his wife Dudu and son Jalal had gone to wait upon Babar to offer their submission to him. Babar was pleased with the conduct of Sher Khan and on his intercession allowed the Nuhani ruler to retain the whole of Bihar.

But the storm did not really subside. There was only a temporary lull. The Afghans now invited Mohmud Lodi to come to Bihar and accepted him as their leader. An all-out effort was planned. The deficiency in artillery was sought to be made good by securing Bengal artillery from Nusrat Shah. When their preparations had been completed, they made a three-pronged attack. Sher Khan was sent against Benares who pressed the operations with such vigour and ability that the garrison had to flee to Chunar for safety. Biban and Bayazid marched towards Gorakhpur while Mahmud Lodi himself laid siege to Chunar.

When Babar heard of this, he was at Dholpur. He quickly repaired to Agra and from there proceeded towards the east. Once again Babar had come sooner than the Afghans had expected. Their failure to capture Chunar had already damped their spirits. The report of the Emperor's approach unnerved them. Sher Khan was the first to disengage and retreat. This forced others also to fall back. On the confluence of the Gogra with the Ganges, Babar gave the united strength of the Afghans such a stunning blow that they could make no further stand anywhere. Mahmud Lodi crossed the Gandak and sought shelter with Nusrat Shah. Sultan Jalaluddin Nuhani, Sher Khan Sur, Farid Khan Nuhani and Alaul Khan Sur sent letters of apology and submission. Thus the rebellion ended in smoke. Babar pursued the rebels upto the frontiers of Bengal where Nusrat Shah sent him proposals for a treaty of friendly neutrality in May 1529. It was agreed between them that neither party should attack the other's territory or help its rebels or enemies. Mahmud now settled down in Bengal, and Nusrat Shah married one of his daughters to him and assigned him a suitable *jagir*.

Babar now settled matters with Jalaluddin. He was unwilling to forgive his treachery. But Sher Khan's advocacy in his favour softened him a little and he agreed to allow him to retain Bihar subject to certain conditions. A part of his territory was made *Khalsa* and assigned to Babar's personal followers. Another slice was assigned to Muhammad Khan Nuhani. For the rest Jalal had to employ Sher Khan as his minister. Thus Sher Khan emerged much stronger than before. He was for the present, pacifically inclined, towards the Chaghtais, hence during the rest of his life, Babar had no further trouble from the side of the Afghans.

Babar's success in India did not satisfy his ambitions. The lure of Samarqand was still there. He therefore decided to make India a stepping stone to his triumphal entry into the capital of his great ancestor, Timur. Some of his men were also pining to return home. The heat of 1526 had taken a good toll of them and had frightened many more. Babar had persuaded them to stay on as long as his title to the throne of Delhi was in doubt, but with the defeat of Rana Sanga his supremacy was for the time being assured. Hence he could no longer withhold permission to allow them to return while he did not want to let them idle away their time either, so he decided to send his eldest son Humayun along with them.

Humayun was born in March, 1508. His mother Maham Begam was related to Sultan Husain Baiqara and was a Shia. But when she met Babar in 1506, she was so charmed by his handsome features and lovable qualities that she decided to marry him despite his Sunni leanings. Her personal charm and polished

Central Asia
Early career of
Humayun

manners soon made her the favourite wife of Babar. She rose still higher in the regard of her husband when two years later, she gave birth to the heir to the throne which assured the continuity of his line.

It was in such an atmosphere of love and affection that Humayun spent his early years. As he grew up and the nobility of his character was unfolded, he rose higher and higher in the affections of his father. Babar desired Humayun to be an ideal monarch. He therefore wanted to inculcate in him all possible virtues and merits. He was given the best possible teachers under whose care he made rapid progress in his studies and learnt Arabic, Persian and Turki. He also acquired proficiency as a poet and his Persian verses have been quoted by contemporary as well as later historians. He took keen interest in Mathematics, Philosophy and Astrology, in the last of which he attained such high ability that he would often prefer his own calculations to anybody else's. On coming to India, he picked up knowledge of Hindi and could express himself in that language freely. But he did not possess a good hand and was often rebuked by his father for this shortcoming. His style was a little involved and even when he had grown into manhood Babar had to address him a letter of reprimand against circumlocution and verbiage. He advised him to be direct and forthright in his statements which would save him as much time as well as that of his reader. Another defect in Humayun's education was that he could not interest himself in subjects of practical utility *e.g.* History, Politics, Economics *etc.* Instead he was devoted to speculative studies which enriched his imagination. This could be one of the reasons why he failed to cut much ice in the realm of action. He was given grounding in military and administrative training so that he might equip himself adequately for shouldering his high responsibilities and Babar took a constant interest in his career because although he had other sons he loved Humayun most.

It was at the age of 12 that Humayun made his entry into public life and in 1520 was appointed governor of Badakhshan.

This remained his permanent assignment almost upto the time of his accession, although he did not always remain there. When Babar led his final invasion into India, he decided to have Humayun by his side and refused to advance till he had come from Badakhshan although his delay in coming was resented as suicidal to his plans. In India, Humayun had acquitted himself creditably. He had fought a number of engagements against the Afghans. At Panipat, he had commanded the right flank and after victory had dashed on to Agra and captured it defeating Vikramaditya of Gwalior. On Babar's arrival, he presented him the famous Kohi-noor, received from the queen of Vikramaditya, but Babar graciously returned it back to him as a mark of favour and affection. Humayun was also given $3\frac{1}{2}$ lakh tankas at the time.

of general distribution of gifts by Babar. A little later, he dispersed the Afghans collected at Jaj-mau and then at the battle of Khanua against Ranga Sanga, once more commanded the right flank. In recognition of his high status and noble services, Babar assigned him the districts of Hisar Firuza and Sambhal.

Yet he could no longer detain him in India. His possessions in Afghanistan and Badakhshan lay exposed to the attacks of his Central Asian neighbours. Hence a competent and reliable governor had to be sent as a measure of security. The eldest son was to act as the Viceroy of Babar's non-Indian possessions. But it was not merely for reasons of security that he had sent him there. He had instructed him either to conquer Bokhara and Samarqand himself or keep the army in readiness for an attack under him. But Humayun found the company of Sufis and Qalandars far more agreeable and wrote to his father about the impermanance of life, hollowness of worldly pleasures and attractions of the life of a *darwish*. Babar felt much pained at this and wrote him that his conduct was incompatible with ideals of government and sovereignty. Humayun was shaken from his torpor only when he heard of Babar's illness and he came post haste to India.

Haidar Mirza Dughlat says that Babar summoned him back to India so that in the event of his death the successor to Humayun's illness and the throne should be available at hand. Dr. the death of Babar Sukumar Banerji opines that Babar had probably called him to cure him of his mood of renunciation. He is unable to agree with Erskine and Mrs. Beveridge in their belief that he came to India at the urgent summons of his mother who had got scent of the Khalifa's conspiracy against him. After a while, Babar intended sending him back again to Badakhshan but he begged to be excused from this. Hence he was sent to govern Sambhal while Badakhshan was assigned to Mirza Sulaiman. Some time later, Humayun fell seriously ill and every one despaired of his life. It is said that Babar addressed fervent appeals to God to spare him and to take his life instead. His prayer was granted and Humayun soon became convalescent while Babar's health began to decline and he died a few months later in December 1530.

Humayun may or may not have been saved by Babar laying down his life in exchange for his son's but his contemporaries were persuaded that it was so. His daughter Gulbadan Begam gave full credence to it. But what militates against this belief is that God did not cure Humayun immediately for he still remained confined to bed for a number of weeks. Nor did Babar die soon after Humayun's recovery. A number of months elapsed before he died and even then not of high fever from which Humayun had suffered but of a disorder in the bowels which his physicians regarded as the outcome of poisoning by the mother of Ibrahim.

Babar died on December 26, 1530. Three days before, he had summoned Humayun, and in the presence of Nizamuddin Khalifa, the *wazir* and other nobles seated him on the throne as his successor and ordered them all to acknowledge him as their sovereign. But in spite of this, Humayun did not secure his father's throne immediately after the latter's death.

This was allegedly due to a conspiracy by Khalifa. Erskine and Mrs. Beveridge say that Khalifa had long been dissatisfied with Humayun and regarded him as unfit for the throne. But no contemporary author has referred to the causes of his dissatisfaction. It has been surmised by some that it was probably due to Humayun's undue softness, distaste for affairs of government and lack of capacity to enforce strict discipline. Some have attributed it to Khalifa's dislike of Humayun's Shia mother. But it cannot be definitely stated as to when the conspiracy started and whether it was organised, in public interest or to secure a personal advantage.

Nizamuddin Ahmad says that Khalifa wanted to offer the throne to Mahdi Khwaja, who had married Khanzada Begam. He had been in Babar's service practically for twenty years, was an experienced warrior of repute and had enjoyed the same honour both at Kabul and Khanua as Humayun. Being older in age he had acquired a sober outlook and considerable experience of public affairs. His general conduct was also without blemish. But Babar was not informed of the conspiracy. May be, it was initiated when Babar was gasping out his last breaths. Having made all preparations for the supersession of Humayun, Khalifa went to meet Mahdi Khwaja. When he had left and Mahdi Khwaja thought he was alone, he unburdened his resentment against Khalifa's utter ingratitude towards the line of his master by saying that if by the grace of God he acquired sovereignty, the first thing that he would do would be to flay alive that old traitor and his accomplices. As misfortune would have it, it was overheard by Nizamuddin Ahmad's father who was standing behind. He reported what he had heard to the Khalifa and advised him not to play false to Humayun. Having known Mahdi Khwaja's latest sentiments, it would have been suicidal to place him on the throne. Hence he summoned Humayun to the palace and proclaimed him emperor on December 30, 1530.

As a conqueror Babar was a great empire-builder. But by conquests alone no state can survive for long. For the stability of a new Government it is necessary that its internal organisation should be sound and its local officers should be amenable to the control and discipline of the centre. Although Babar modified the Afghan polity in a number of respects but on that basis alone it cannot be asserted that he had established a satisfactory

government for the conquered territory. The weak confederal monarchy of the Afghans was replaced by a divine right despotism. The dignity and power of the sovereign was greatly enhanced and even his highest nobles and Begs had to conduct themselves as mere servants of the crown. He had a sort of Prime Minister who served as a link between the sovereign and the departmental heads. This post was held by Mir Nizamuddin Khalifa. He introduced Persian ways and manners at the court and built a number of palaces, underground rooms, *banlis* and baths as accessories of a happy and cultured life. This imparted a sense of urbanity and stability to his government. He gave higher appointments to Afghans and the Hindus and Dilwar Khan Lodi received the title of Khan-i-Khanan. But the Afghans were not appointed to positions where they could precipitate a fall by turning traitors. Instead, he played the Afghans against each other. Thus exploiting internal jealousies of the Afghans to break their power by adopting the principle of divide and rule.

Between Agra and Kabul he established *dak-chaukis* at intervals of 15 miles and maintained six good horses at each one of these outposts so that news travelled at a high speed and kept the emperor posted up to date. He might have made similar arrangements for other places. But the subordinate local officers in districts and provinces enjoyed virtually the same autonomy as before and most of the armed forces were stationed within their jurisdiction and under their direct command. Babar could not establish effective and comprehensive control over them, nor could he take any steps for promotion of agriculture, extension of public education or reform of the judiciary. His fiscal policy was unsound. The treasures of Delhi and Agra were squandered away in reckless gifts to all and sundry so much so that people even at Kabul got at least one silver piece each. This led to a severe financial stringency in 1528 and it became one of the principal headaches of his successor.

Abbas Khan Sarwani quotes the following observations on Babar's administration from the mouth of Sher Khan :—

"Since I have been amongst the Mughals, and know their conduct in action, I see that they have no order or discipline and that their kings, from pride of birth and station, do not personally superintend the government, but leave all the affairs and business of the State to their nobles and ministers, in whose sayings and doings they put perfect confidence. These grantees act on corrupt motives in every case, whether it be that of a soldier's, or a cultivator's or a rebellious zamindar's. Whoever has money, whether loyal or disloyal, can get his business settled as he likes by paying for it, but if a man has no money, although he may have displayed his loyalty on a hundred occasions, or be he a veteran soldier, he will never gain his end. From this lust of gold they make no distinction between friend and foe...."

Sher Khan is credited to have boasted that he would be able to drive the Chaghatais out of India. This actually happened later on. Hence some doubts have been raised about Babar's title to be regarded as the founder of the Timurid dynasty in India. Estimate of Babar's work in India

When a person secures power and dominion over a land either by conquest or by choice of the people and is succeeded by his descendants on the throne of that land, he is regarded as the founder of a new dynasty and a new state. In 16th century India there were no democratic representative bodies through which the people could express their opinion. Hence Babar could not acquire sovereignty of India with the willing consent of the people. But in Muslim lands, the practice had grown of regarding the choice of the political leaders of a community as the choice of the people. In this context, invitation to Babar by Daulat Khan Lodi and Alam Khan Lodi acquires a special significance. He had also been invited by the most powerful Hindu Raja of Northern India. It may, therefore, be held with some justification that he came to India at the invitation of its people. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that these invitations did not go very far in securing for him the throne of Delhi and Agra. Daulat Khan had invited Babar not to seat him on the throne but to subserve his own interests and when he found his stay detrimental to his interests, he rose in arms against him and even planned to way lay and murder him. Even when vanquished in war and brought before the royal presence with the two swords hanging down his neck which he always carried for Babar's murder, Daulat was vain enough to refuse to kneel before Babar and had to be kicked into an unwilling obeissance. Alam Khan had also deserted Babar so that in the historic battle against Ibrahim Babar fought not for the elevation of a rival Lodi prince but for improving his own fortunes. Similarly, Rana Sanga also did not want Babar to stay in India. He had, instead, hoped that he would capture Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Agra while Babar would divert Ibrahim's forces towards the west. As soon as Babar started consolidating his position by supplanting all vestiges of Lodi power, Rana Sanga turned hostile and joined hands with the Afghans to form a powerful front against him to roll him back to Kabul. Thus it would appear that these invitations did not contribute to Babar's success in India. Some Afghan nobles no doubt joined him and rendered him some service. But on that basis it cannot be asserted that Babar acquired sovereignty over Hindustan by the consent of the people. His success was mainly due to his army. His right to sovereignty was thus based on conquest. At that time, most of Northern India was held by the Lodis and the Rajputs. Babar defeated Ibrahim and captured practically the whole of his kingdom. Some Afghan nobles were won over by grants of land and money while the rest were defeated and driven out. The Afghan prince of

Bihar had submitted to his authority due to Sher Khan's influence. He defeated all Afghan counter-attacks and though he could not destroy their power completely he crippled it so effectively that none of the principal followers of the Lodis was able to do any mischief later. But he helped in the future rise of Sher Khan by retaining the integrity of the kingdom of Bihar and leaving it in his hands because he was misled by his flattery and astute diplomacy.

He could not deliver an equally crushing blow to the Rajputs. But by capturing Gwalior, Bayana, Ranthambhor and Chanderi he achieved greater successes than had ever fallen to the lot of the Lodis and Rajput dreams of sovereignty over Northern India were decisively shattered to the ground. Babar not only secured signal victories, but the superiority of his arms was admitted by all. Consequently, the conquered could not even entertain the hope of making a successful counter-attack against him. Babar had become so confident of his hold on India that he not only changed the centre of gravity of his power from Kabul to Delhi and Agra but after Khanua permitted his eldest son Humayun to proceed to Badakhshan along with all those soldiers and captains who were feeling unusually homesick. He instructed Humayun to be on the lookout for a suitable opportunity to conquer and annex Hisar, Balkh, Fergana and Samarkand and intended leading another expedition against the capital of Timur. During his absence, Humayun was to act as his deputy in India. In the light of all this, it can, unhesitatingly, be stated that Babar did found a new dynasty in India by virtue of his conquests.

For the consolidation of his conquests, he made certain changes in the administrative edifice so that a novel scheme of government came into force. He repudiated subservience to the Caliph and established a fully sovereign monarchy. He asserted the supremacy of the ruler and restrained the policy of religious intolerance. By marrying daughters of Medini Rai to Kamran and Humayun, he set the direction to the future Rajput policy to his descendants. The son of Rana Sanga was accepted as a vassal and although he was asked to surrender Ranthambhor on grounds of imperial necessity he was compensated by the award of Shamsabad in exchange. His grandson Akbar followed the same policy later, on a larger scale. He introduced notable changes in the procedure and etiquette to be observed at the court and rationalised and humanised the relationship between the king and the nobility and between the sovereign and the soldiery. He realised the relatively superior importance of India over other parts of his empire and that is why he spent the remaining five years of his life in this country while Kabul, Qandahar, Ghazni and Badkhshan were ruled by governors. Although not quite satisfied with certain aspects of Humayun's conduct,

he paid due regard to the higher claims of the eldest son and nominated him his successor. Thus in the indefinite law of succession, he tried to introduce a definite convention. He also demonstrated the value of artillery and revolutionized the technique of war.

These factors reinforce his claims to be regarded as the founder of a new dynasty. But at the same time, this too is patent that Babar was not quite happy in India. He was impressed by its wide limits, rich soil, beautiful flora and fauna, abundance of gold and silver, and general prosperity. But he was constantly oppressed by its heat, dust and wind so that he was ever reminded of the more agreeable climate of Kabul and Persia. He ran down the character and culture of the people of this land. He relished opium and *majum* but always pined for good liquor and fine fruit. The water-melon was disturbingly unforgettable. His ambition was not satiated with the conquest of Hindustan. He could never reconcile himself to the idea of concentrating all his energy to the establishment of an all-India empire. He could never give up his hankering for the throne of Samarkand. It may therefore be inferred that the conquest of India was not an end but only a means to an end. He aspired to be the ruler of Central Asia with the help of Indian resources and if he had succeeded in this venture he would have preferred Samarkand to Delhi or Agra and would have governed India through a princely viceroy.

A reference has already been made to the defects in his government and these could and did lead to the dissolution of his Indian Empire. His dying behest to Humayun in a way ensured the break-up of the empire. It may therefore be held that what he reared up with one hand, he demolished with the other. The troubles of Humayun though partly due to his own character and policy, were largely a part of his inheritance from Babar. These helped in the foundation of the second Afghan Empire in India. Thus the empire of Babar was destroyed by forces which were inherent in his own policy. The Timurid empire in India, was therefore, founded neither by what happened in 1397-1399 nor by what transpired between 1526 and 1540. Humayun succeeded in recapturing Delhi, Agra and Lahore after a lapse of fifteen years but when he died the Surs had adequate strength to mount a successful counter-offensive. Akbar, had therefore, to initiate the task almost afresh. He made conquests, organised the newly conquered territory under an efficient system of Government, adopted a secular and national policy and tried to secure the willing co-operation of the people in general. Hence Akbar is sometimes described as the real founder of the Timurid dynasty in India. It would perhaps be nearer the truth to say that while Babar founded the dynasty, Akbar strengthened, consolidated and extended its hold on the

country. The policy adopted by Akbar was in many respects initiated by his grand-father.

The accession of Babar heralded a new age in Indian history. Some people regard it even as the beginning of the modern and the end of the medieval age. But others date the beginning of the modern age from the War of Indian Independence in 1857, or the foundation of Brahmo Samaj, or the introduction of western education in India. In most of the Indian and foreign universities while dividing Indian history into ancient, medieval and modern periods, the medieval age is extended to 1707, 1748 or even 1761. This means that a vast majority of scholars of Indian history do not regard 1526 as the dividing line between the medieval and the modern age. It is, therefore, untenable to hold that the modern age began with the accession of Babar in 1526.

Notwithstanding this, the year 1526 does mark the advent of a new age. Before 1526, the Muslim rulers of Delhi called themselves Sultans and recognized the legal sovereignty of the Caliph. But Babar and his successors did not recognize the authority of any foreign superior. They called themselves 'Padshah' and assumed titles which had formerly been used by the Caliphs. Thus the dignity of the sovereign was considerably enhanced and in accordance with the Indo-Persian tradition they were looked upon as semi-divine. That is why they introduced '*Jharokha Darshan*' i.e. appearance at the balcony in the morning. It was an age of great despots in Europe as well; but the way in which travellers from there have dwelt on the majesty, magnificence and wealth of the Timurid Emperors of India suggests that rulers in their homelands were no match to them in these respects. Later on, the ways and manners of the emperor were imitated not only by their nobles and vassals but even by independent rulers and governors and presidents of European Trading Companies. The traditions and ideals of extravagant magnificence reminiscent of the Mughals survived even during the British rule. It would thus appear, that henceforward, the dignity and majesty of the ruling classes and the sovereign recorded an unprecedented increase.

Secondly, before 1526 most of the Sultans had a narrow sectarian outlook. The principal aim of their government was preservation of the rights of the faithful. Because of this, they could never secure the affection of their Hindu subjects. They had imposed numerous social, political and religious disabilities on them. But after 1526, there is a welcome change in this policy. Babar had defeated the Afghans and the Rajputs no doubt but instead of aiming at their extermination, he tried to secure

their services for extending his dynastic interests. His wars did not leave him sufficient leisure to work out this policy. But he initiated it all right. Under Akbar a broader view was taken of the national interests and he tried to bring all his subjects on a footing of equality in respect of their civil and political rights. Practically the same policy continued even after him. The British first backed up the Hindus to crush the Muslims and when they found the Hindus to have grown more organised and powerful, they started showering their favours on the Muslims. But all the while they kept up a show of freedom from all sectarian bias. The Constitution of Indian Union also has established a secular and sovereign democratic republic. Even before 1526, some rulers of Delhi had adopted a policy of secularism but they were mere exceptions. After 1526, Aurangzeb followed a policy of religious persecution but this was only an exception to the general rule of secularism. There was sometimes a change in the nature and extent of sovereignty and secularism but speaking broadly, it can certainly be stated that after 1526 a national and liberal outlook found much greater favour than sectarian or communal bias.

Another characteristic of the new age is an unprecedented growth in fine arts. During the Sultanate period, painting received no recognition or encouragement at the hands of the rulers. But Babar and his descendants evinced great interest in painting so that it became and has ever since remained a living art. Its technique, colour-scheme and ideology has undergone changes in course of its development but its appeal to aesthetic became a permanent feature.

Similarly, in the realm of architecture, although numerous great monuments had been reared up during the ancient and the early medieval periods, yet the Timurid buildings at Sikri, Sikandara, Agra and Delhi form a unique architectural treasure, the like of which had never been produced before. They represent, on the one hand, a happy synthesis of Indo-Muslim art traditions and on the other the incorporation of the colour and delicacy of design characteristic of painting.

Music also had great votaries who have left their permanent impress on the art in India. Other arts also made great progress under the patronage of the State. Thus during this period, there was much greater urbanity, magnificence and growth in fine arts than under the Sultans which distinguishes it from the earlier period.

The sixteenth century ushered in a welcome change in inter-communal relationship. Hindus and Muslims now came closer to each other in different walks of life. With greater peaceful contacts, they acquired greater respect, sympathy and regard of each other. Almost every Indian state, irrespective of the reli-

gion of its ruler, had a mixed population, and Hindus and Muslims manned the services of these various states as equal citizens which developed greater amity and understanding in the political sphere. Similarly, great musicians, painters, sculptors, calligraphists *etc.*, drew disciples and admirers from both the communities. The same happened in the sphere of religion. In normal social life, Hindus and Muslims participated in the fairs and festivals of each other and lived in peace and co-operation like good neighbours. Most of the members of both the communities now regarded each other as members of a common nation, land, community, and the former distinction of native and alien, conqueror and the conquered, rulers and the ruled practically disappeared.

In the realm of language and literature, Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian though still cultivated lost their universal appeal.

They embellished a courtier and adorned a scholar but local dialects soon occupied the place of pride as languages commonly spoken and understood. In many cases, independent local dynasties had started patronising regional languages even from the 15th century and had accorded to them the honour of official state languages. This tendency became stolid. Their universal during this period. Religious reformers preached their doctrines through the medium of these popular languages and composed their works in them. A number of authors enriched their literature by rendering some of the most popular and the most celebrated Sanskrit works into the languages of their region. Local dialects thus became regional languages with a literature of their own and since then have been making a steady progress.

Another special feature of this period is the coming of European trading companies into India. Whatever might have been their original motives in coming to this land,

European Trading Companies they soon developed political ambitions which in the sequel brought India and Indians into a much closer contact with the west. European navigators had long been exploring a sea-route to India and other eastern lands. Their efforts were crowned with success when in 1498 Vasco da Gama rounded the continent of Africa and finally reached the Indian port Calicut. This indissolubly linked up the east with the west. Taking advantage of this, the Portuguese sent their trading companies to India. They came when she was passing through a period of disintegration and political turmoil. The Portuguese decided to dabble in local politics and soon secured a number of independent footholds on the Indian seacoast. All Akbar's efforts to drive them out proved unavailing. The Portuguese took sedulous care to destroy all attempts at building an Indian navy so that their supremacy on the sea remained unchallenged. But they were soon to have rivals from

other European lands. The Dutch and the English had made their appearance even in the time of Akbar. The French and the Danes came soon after. None of these newcomers had an opportunity for territorial aggrandisement as long as Aurangzeb was alive. But during the 18th century, India became the scene of their political intrigues and mutual rivalries, and at last one of them not only eliminated all its European rivals but succeeded in subjugating or setting aside all native princes—Mughal, Maratha, Sikh, Rajput and others all alike. It thus acquired a paramount status in India. Other trading companies retained only a few scattered trading settlements. India had had contacts with Europe and the west ever since the dawn of history but the relationship established during this period was altogether unique both in respect of its character and the motives inspiring it. The advent of the Timurids had thus synchronised with the beginning of a new age in the realm not only of politics but also of social, cultural, religious and international relationships.

Among medieval empire-builders, Babar stands unique and unparalleled. Many Asian and European rulers of that age possessed high merits as rulers or leaders and personally appear so commonplace or insignificant in certain respects that they fail to excite our admiration or arrest our attention by that charm and nobility which is peculiarly Babar's. This is essentially due to Babar's versatile genius and richness of human qualities. He deserves respect not merely as a ruler and a general but also as a distinguished man of letters, a connoisseur of art, a devoted student of Nature, a peerless diarist, a sincere and generous soul and a God-fearing Musalman.

As a warrior, Babar deserves to be ranked among the greatest captains of war. He was a born leader so that he had little difficulty in maintaining discipline, enforcing obedience and securing hearty co-operation from his followers even in the sorest straits. He did not lack personal courage, endurance, heroism or self-confidence but he devoted himself principally to the direction of war because he was conscious of the rightful duties of a general. He had a general's eye on the weaknesses of his enemy, made the best use of his resources, employed the latest tactics of war by properly integrating them to his general strategy, made an excellent use of his scouts and neither got unduly elated in moments of victory nor lost his self-confidence in the blackest hour of defeat. He took the fullest advantage of his artillery, *tulughma* parties and defensive arrangements. Before his coming to India, he had suffered a number of reverses but he always benefited by his defeats and never lost faith in his star. He would brook no indiscipline and lawlessness among his soldiers and we are told how after the conquest of Bhira he restrained them

from indulging in indiscriminate plunder. And yet he had for them all love and bonhomie as comrades in arms. Once while caught in a storm and snow-fall, he refused to avail himself of the shelter of a cave because most of his men 'were out in the snow and drift'. It is by conduct such as this that he endeared himself to his followers. When victory was achieved, he rewarded them handsomely and during feasts and festivities he mixed with them in an informal and cordial manner. That is why his soldiers gladly carried out his orders even at the risk of their lives.

It was with their assistance that he preserved his hold over Farghana, captured Samarcand, brought Kabul under his permanent sway and finally crushed the power of the Afghans and the Rajputs to usher in the Timurid dynasty in India. But

As a ruler

he was no mere conqueror. He had the makings of a good ruler though in this respect he cannot stand comparison with Akbar, Alauddin, or Sher Shah. He was a jealous upholder of the dignity of the Crown and he considered it unworthy of his high office to stoop to favouritism, partisanship, injustice or oppression. He gave due importance to his ~~kingdom~~ and held consultation with them in the open durbar. He ~~was~~ a paternal ruler, interested in the welfare of his people and regarded it as his duty to promote their happiness, honour and prosperity. But he did not have the knack of creating new institutions or of exploiting existing ones to their maximum capacity. That is why his hold over Farghana, Samarcand, Kabul or India never acquired stability and strength.

But his other qualities are of such a pleasing character that he commanded respect in every company. His contemporary and kinsman Mirza Haidar Dughlat

As a man of letters

says "In the composition of Turki poetry he was second only to Amir Ali Shir. He has written a *divan* in the most lucid Turki. He invented a style of verse called *mubaiyan* and was the author of a most useful treatise on jurisprudence which has been generally adopted. He also wrote an essay on Turki prosody, more elegant than any other. . . . Then there is his *Waqai*, or Turki *Memoirs* written in simple, unaffected, yet pure style."

Among Babar's works, the most outstanding is undoubtedly his *Memoirs*. It is a matter of great regret that Babar could not find time to record the events of 1503-1504, 1508-1519 and 1520-1525. In his autobiography, there is a ring of sincerity and truthfulness all along and the way he dwells upon his faults and merits bubbles with life and vivacity. How while under the influence of *majum* he had a narrow escape from drowning; how while it was heavily snowing and the horses sank deep upto their girths, he beat a road but did not worry those who did not of themselves

participate in this wearisome toil and why; what thoughts crossed his mind on capturing Samarcand; what was his reaction to the attempt to poison him by Ibrahim's mother; under what circumstances and when he resolved to give up wine and why later he went back on his former vows; these and other incidents are narrated with such candour and frankness that the reader finds himself led into the innermost chambers of his thoughts and emotions and feels as if he were face to face with Babar in life and blood. That he was an excellent and penetrating judge of men is amply borne out by those pages of the *Memoirs* in which he presents pen-pictures of his contemporaries. His accounts are usually objective and dispassionate and his personal likes and dislikes are not allowed to warp his judgment. His accounts of Daulat Khan, Alam Khan, Ibrahim Lodi and Rana Sangram Singh testify to his love of truth and freedom from bias. He was equally at home in the description of nature. He furnishes brief notices of all lands he visited and speaks of their flora and fauna, natural beauty, hill and dale, rivers and lakes, fields and forests. What is particularly remarkable is the charm of his narration and accuracy of detail. His account of India, however, is not so accurate because at the time of writing he had not acquired sufficient familiarity with the land so that he was often misled by appearances and missed the true character of things. Sometimes he narrates local superstitions and explains how he proved their baselessness. Babar was naturally drawn towards dainty dishes, bold adventures, informal convivial parties, variegated pleasures of the flesh, a life of cultured ease and a place of honour and distinction among his fellowmen and these traits of his character are fully illustrated by his *Memoirs*. Thus his autobiography is an extremely valuable document for more reasons than one. Some competent critics have gone even to the length of stating that it is largely due to his priceless *Memoirs* that in the eyes of historians and biographers Babar has acquired a place of pride among his contemporaries. Others assign to it an honourable place among the greatest autobiographies of the world. Babar thus deserves a high place even as a man of letters.

Babar deserves esteem as a householder. He had respect for his seniors and was kind and affectionate to his wives and children. He not only provided for their physical comforts but took good care to inculcate into them qualities of head and heart. He treated his brothers and kinsmen well and overlooked their faults even when they were found to be in the wrong and regarded it as his special privilege to offer them protection in their hour of adversity. In his dealings with his ministers, soldiers and captains he was generous and cordial without compromising his dignity.

He was a man of keen intelligence and high attainments. He was a penetrating thinker, a powerful orator and a keen judge of art. Ambition, sturdy self-confidence and sense of his own dignity was the very marrow of his bones. He had faith in the grace and omnipotence of God and he was convinced that he responded to all sincere prayers. He had faith in his star and he thought that with the grace of God he could achieve even the impossible by his resolute exertion. All these qualities are attractive and enviable. But being human, he had his share of human weaknesses. As was customary in those days, he was addicted to wine and sensuality. His ambition sometimes got the better of his discretion and he accepted the suzerainty of the ruler of Persia and mortgaged his conscience in order to acquire Samarcand. Sometimes his liberality crossed all limits of propriety so that he squandered away the hoarded treasures in wanton gifts. Though a God-fearing individual, he did not always stick to his vows. He was a man of noble and generous sentiments and his general behaviour towards the Rajputs and the Hindus was on the whole good but he could not keep himself aloof from exhibition of occasional iconoclastic fury. That is why he destroyed the temple commemorating the birth-place of Rama at Ayodhya and replaced it by a mosque. While writing about his wars against the Rajputs, he calls them *hejirs* and speaks of a *Jehad* against them. But with all his fortes and foibles, he stands out on the whole as a very pleasing and esteemable thorough-bred gentleman. He was undoubtedly one of the greatest men of his age.

Further Readings

1. Erskine—*History of India* Vol. 1.
2. Rushbrooke Williams—*An Empirebuilder of the Sixteenth Century*.
3. Sharma—*Mughal Empire in India* Vol. I, pp. 1-66.
4. Denison Ross—*Cambridge History of India* Vol. IV, Chap. I.
5. Edwardes—*Babar, Diarist and Despot*.
6. Lancpoole—*Babar*.
7. Beveridge—*Memoirs of Babar*.
8. Beveridge—*Humayunama of Gulabadian Begam*.
9. Abul Fazl—*Akbarnama*, Vol. I (Tr. into English by Beveridge).
10. Nizamuddin Ahmad—*Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Vol. I (Tr. by De).
11. Briggs—*Rise of Muhammadan Power in India*.
12. Elliot and Dawson—Vols. IV and V.
13. Banerji—*Humayun Badshah* Vol. I.

CHAPTER II

HUMAYUN AND SHER KHAN (Struggle for Supremacy.)

Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun, the second Timurid ruler of India succeeded to the throne of his father no doubt but his position was considerably compromised by Khalifa's conspiracy. Even those who had no hand in it felt that when Babar's friend and *Wazir* himself had thought of passing over his son, the latter could not be a person worthy of the throne. The conspirators on the other hand could not completely shake off seditious thoughts. It would have been prudent on the part of Humayun to have removed all these latter from places of trust and responsibility. If he could have had them flayed alive as Mahdi Khwaja had proposed it might have been better still. But his own goodness and weakness of the central power prevented him from taking any drastic action. He remembered the dying words of his father : "Humayun, I commit to God's keeping you and your brothers and all my kinsfolk and your people and my people; and all of those I confide to you. . . ."

Humayun's filial devotion would have been compromised if he went against the last wish of his father, for any injury to the latter's principal followers may depress his soul in heaven. It is because of such sentimentalism that Humayun desisted from taking any harsh measures even against his brothers for he never forgot Babar's testamentary advice *viz.*, "Do naught against your brothers, even though they may deserve it." And it was a singular misfortune of Humayun that his generosity was generally ill-requited by his brothers and kinsmen and senior nobles of Babar. This brought him a crop of sufferings and misfortunes.

This was not all. He had other serious difficulties. As indicated in the last chapter, Babar had bequeathed to him an empty treasury and an ill-organised kingdom. The army that had covered itself with glory under Babar was not equally serviceable under his son as we shall see later. It consisted of men of diverse races and lands, often torn by mutual dissensions and jealousies. Babar had enjoyed the confidence of Mughals, Turks, Uzbegs, Afghans and Hindustanis by the force of his personality. But Humayun a mere lad of 23 found it hard to keep them united and loyal.

Thus the newly founded kingdom of the Timurids was a house divided against itself. And their enemies were vigilant

and brave. The Afghan snake had been scotched but not killed. Sher Khan was slowly but surely building up his strength for a final show-down. Bahadur Shah of Gujerat had designs on Malwa, Rajputana and Delhi itself. Nusrat Shah of Bengal was allied to the Lodis and had married his daughter to the Lodi pretender Mahmud Lodi and had granted him asylum. He could champion the cause of his son-in-law against Humayun. The Arghuns whom Babar had displaced in Afghanistan were entrenched in Sindh and would be only too glad to take advantage of his son's difficulties.

But the worst enemy of Humayun was Humayun himself. He was given to intoxication with a special weakness for opium. He was inordinately generous and forgave where he should have punished. He was fond of luxury and ease and was in the midst of song and music when he should have been in the saddle or on the council table. He had a certain element of wanton abandon and lack of perseverance in pursuit of his designs. These added to his difficulties and offset his virtues as a bold general, an experienced ruler, a generous master and a loving soul. Some of his faults were inherited from his father, for Babar too loved to have his fill of worldly pleasures and to treat his people with kindness, generosity and forbearance. But Babar never indulged in sensual pleasures while his enemy was knocking at the gates. It was only after victories that he allowed himself that respite. Humayun often relapsed into relaxation while he was still half-way. Then Babar had the advantage of his personality and he was also capable of inflicting exemplary punishment when occasion demanded it. That is why he could maintain his authority intact. The right thing for Humayun would have been to reward the able and the loyal, to keep an eye over the disaffected and to punish the latter in an exemplary manner when they were found to be definitely wrong so that it may have a deterrent effect on other likeminded people. But Humayun could not make resolute ruthlessness a part of his policy. He would often leave things half-done. It is because of these defects of his character that his difficulties multiplied and ultimately led to his expulsion from his dominion.

Humayun adopted the policy of 'forget and forgive' and allowed the arch-traitor Khalifa to continue in office, and even after

Early measures

his death, his sons continued to bask in royal favour. Mahdi Khwaja was given no high office but he was not molested either for we are told that when he married his sister Sultanum to Hindal he was able to spend lots of money. He died out of office but neither in disgrace nor in penury. Among other officers, Junaid Barlas continued as the Viceroy in the east while Mirza Sulaiman was left undisturbed in Badakhshan. Muhammad Zaman Mirza, a grandson of Sultan Husain Baiqara and the husband of Humayun's elder half-sister Masuma Sultan Begam retained his *jagir*

in Bihar. Muhammad Sultan Mirza, another grandson of Sultan Husain was confirmed in his *jagir* of Kanauj. Kamran retained Kabul and Qandahar while Askari got Sambhal and Hindal, Alwar. Humayun adopted an attitude of gracious magnanimity towards all and sundry and reconciled everyone to his authority by the award of *jagirs*, titles and gifts.

But Kamran was unwilling to remain content with what he had held under Babar. His *jagir* had always been in the ratio of 5 : 6 in comparison to that of Humayun. He therefore felt that he must have at least the whole of the Punjab in addition to what he already possessed. Hence he started at the head of his army on the ostensible reason to congratulate his brother. Humayun had at that time marched against the Raja of Kalinjar and was laying siege to the fort when he heard of Kamran's movements. He did not want to begin the reign with a war against his own brother. Hence he tried to conciliate him by the grant of Peshawar and Lamghan. He had hoped that Kamran would be satisfied and return to Kabul. But the latter pressed on to Lahore and captured it by force. Humayun now addressed to him another *farman* conferring on him the whole of the Punjab along with Kabul and Qandahar. Kamran not satisfied, sent him a flat refusal and asked for Hisar Firuza. Humayun conceded this also in order to satisfy Kamran.

It was a serious blunder of Humayun to have been so obliging when Kamran's seizure of Lahore merited punishment. By giving him the whole of the Punjab sedition was richly rewarded. Thus Humayun's conduct made Kamran unduly conceited and powerful and deprived the empire of its best recruiting ground. Humayun suffered a certain loss of face and had to patch up a hurried compromise with the Raja of Kalingar who made his submission but retained all his territory along with the fort.

Humayun's attention was next attracted towards Chunar which had recently been seized by Sher Khan without reference to the Emperor at Agra. But before Humayun could do anything he was informed of a powerful counter-offensive by the Lodis. The Afghans had noticed the dissensions in the Timurid camp and had decided to take advantage of them by launching a vigorous attack. Azam Humayun II, Isa Khan, Biban and Bayazid collected their followers in Bihar and invited Mahmud Lodi once again to assume their leadership. On his arrival, he was formally crowned at Patna and all the Afghans, including Sher Khan acknowledged his legal authority. Mahmud thereupon advanced upon Jaunpur and captured it. Manikpur and Lucknow also fell to the Afghans. Rains now set in and they halted their offensive. Junaïd Barlas informed Humayun of the Afghan advance.

The battle of Dad-
rah (1532)

raised the siege of Chunar and proceeded to the capital where he raised an army and advanced towards the east. Mahmud Lodi also advanced to give him battle and the two forces came face to face with each other at Dadrah, lying between Jaunpur and Lucknow. A number of skirmishes were fought but no decisive action took place for a number of days. Then Sher Khan acted. He was convinced that the old guard did not have the guts to drive out the Chaghtais and he himself could not assume command of the Afghans as long as they were alive. He therefore wished that the enemy be victorious and the old leaders annihilated. Besides, he was not prepared to incur the wrath of Humayun just then. It occurred to him that if he turned traitor, he might help in the destruction of unworthy Afghan leadership and retain the favours Babar had allowed him. He therefore, wrote to Hindu Beg that though he had been forced to accompany the Afghans, he was really loyal to Humayun and would give evidence of this by deserting the Afghans when it would cause them the most grievous injury. Hindu Beg informed Humayun about it, and the latter directed a letter to Sher Khan that if he did as he had promised, not only would he be forgiven for his remissness in the past but also rewarded. This reassured Sher Khan and he fled from the field of battle when the Afghans were making hectic attacks against the enemy. Sher Khan's treachery weakened their line and helped Humayun to turn their flank and rout them. Mahmud fled into Orissa and spent the rest of his life there. The Afghans were now totally demoralised and disheartened and they fled helter and skelter in all directions. Being deprived of the leadership of Mahmud, some of them fled to the court of Bahadur Shah in Gujerat. Their only hope to drive out the Timurids now centred round a victorious campaign by Bahadur Shah.

But all such hopes were doomed to failure and the credit for expelling the Timurids was to go to Sher Khan who was to found the Second Afghan Empire in India. What were the antecedents of this man of destiny?

Early career of Sher Khan

His ancestors were residents of Rohri in Afghanistan, and were not well off either socially or economically. They believed themselves to have descended from Muhammad Sur who belonged to the royal family of Sultan Muizuddin Muhammad of Ghor and who had married an Afghan lady and had settled down in her native village. Ibrahim Sur, the grandfather of Sher Khan came to India in response to Bahlul's general invitation to the Afghans in 1452-1453. Ibrahim had three sons one of whom was named Hasan. Ibrahim's first notable appointment was secured under Jamal Khan of Hisar Firoza who assigned to him a number of villages, including Narnaul and Shamli (Simla?). It was at Narnaul that Hasan's eldest son was born and was given the name of Farid Khan. Prof. Qanungo assigns it to the year 1486 but Dr. Banerji and Dr. Satish Chandra

regard 1472 as the more probable. This, however, is certain that he was born in the reign of Bahlul.

Ibrahim Khan died more or less at the same time as Bahlul and his *jagir* passed to his son Hasan. Jamal Khan was so satisfied with Hasan's conduct that when in 1494 Sikandar transferred him to Jaunpur, he carried Hasan also with him and assigned to him the parganas of Hajipur, Khawaspur Tanda and Sahesram. Hasan took some time to regulate the affairs of his *jagir* and it was in 1497-98 that he was able to take all his people including Farid to the east.

Farid was the eldest among Hasan's eight sons, but his real brother was only one *viz.* Nizam Khan. Their mother was an Afghan lady. Other wives of Hasan were all slave-girls, one of whom wielded great influence over him. She secured a separate *jagir* for her sons Sulaiman and Ahmad while Farid's mother did not even have an adequate maintenance allowance. This led to a brawl between father and the son and Farid took such an umbrage that he left his father's roof and proceeded towards Jaunpur. He intended referring the matter to Jamal Khan but he was forestalled for Hasan had taken the precaution of informing his superior that his eldest son had sulkily left home and should be persuaded to return, or if, because of his evil temper he refused, provision might be made for his maintenance. Accordingly when Farid met Jamal and the latter failed to induce him to return home, he fixed an allowance for him. Farid now joined a school and picked up a working knowledge of Arabic and Persian. He is said to have studied *Gulistan*, *Bostan*, *Sikandarnama*, theology, biography of kings and history. He soon made his mark as a man of industry and intelligence in so far that when Hasan went to Jaunpur, both Jamal Khan and the kinsmen of Hasan pressed him to utilize the services of his talented son.

Hasan decided to assign the management of his *jagir* to him and Farid accepted the offer on two conditions *viz.* that Hasan would not countermand or modify his orders and second, that Farid would have unfettered rights in the management of the *jagir*.

Hasan agreed to these terms so that Farid now began his first apprenticeship in public affairs. He noticed that the *Muqaddams* of the outlying villages did not pay the land-revenue while the Hindu chiefs holding forest-clad forts defied Muslim authority, withheld taxes, refused to answer the summons and seized the royal treasure in transit. Agriculture was neglected, the peasants dissatisfied and many of them had turned bandits while royal officers were slack and negligent. He first assembled the *Muqaddams*, local officers, soldiers and *patwaris* and told them that he had full powers of government and would dismiss

Farid as the officer
of a pargana

all those that neglected their duties, but would jealously defend the rights of all capable and conscientious officers who shall be assured complete security of service. He then summoned the peasants and gave them full freedom to choose between measurement and payment of revenue in cash or division of crops and payment in kind. But he warned them that they would be expected to adhere to their engagement faithfully. Deeds of holding were executed on the lines proposed by the peasant and he was asked to furnish a *qabuliyat* (acceptance) in return for these *pattas* from the State. He directed the *Muqaddams* and the revenue officers to collect the revenue twice a year at the end of each harvesting season. They were warned neither to realize anything in excess nor to leave any arrears. He fixed allowances for all revenue officers and visited all cases of extortion with severe punishments. This restored order and peace in most of the places. Agriculture flourished and the peasants were happy and prosperous. He next raised a volunteer force and attacked the defaulting *muqaddams*. Their property was seized and distributed among the soldiery while their dependents were carried away as hostages and were restored only after all arrears had been cleared and suitable sureties had been furnished for regular payment of revenue in future. He next turned his attention towards the unruly Hindu chiefs. Their villages were sacked and burnt, people killed and women and children enslaved. This humbled them into submission and they offered apologies for their past misconduct and guaranteed good behaviour in future. Thus all classes of people within the pargana were brought under control and authority. Farid took great pains with his work, supervised every little detail, put down lawlessness and made provision for fair justice. Hence he received high opinions from all. In 1518, he once again fell out with his father, was dismissed, and repaired to Agra to wait upon Sultan Ibrahim Lodi.

Farid contacted Daulat Khan, one of the favourites of the Sultan and so impressed him by his ability and devotion that he agreed to plead his case with the Sultan. But

Farid and Ibrahim Lodi when Ibrahim heard the story, he remarked, "He who complains against his father cannot be a desirable person. Pack him off

from here". Farid was greatly disheartened but he continued to hang on. About 1522-1523, his father died. He now submitted to the Sultan that as he was the eldest and the ablest among his father's sons, so the latter's *jagir* might be assigned to him. Through Daulat Khan's good offices, his prayer was granted and he returned home with a royal *farman* assigning the entire *jagir* to him. But Ibrahim was soon after defeated and killed at Panipat so that Farid had to shift for his security once again.

Farid now decided to enter the service of the most powerful Afghan chief in the east *viz.* Muhammad Shah Nuhani, the ruler of Bihar. By his ability, loyalty and devotion to duty he won the confidence of his master and rose to be his principal adviser. He thus became the most powerful man in the government of Bihar. He thus excited the envy of many an Afghan leader. It was during this period that he killed a tiger by a single stroke of his sword which won for him the title of Sher Khan. Sultan Muhammad Shah now appointed him the *ataliq* (guardian tutor) of his son Jalal. The opponents of Sher Khan saw in this the portents of perpetuation of his domination even during the reign of Muhammad Shah's successor. Hence they busied themselves in plotting against him. Once, while he was away settling the affairs of his *jagir*, Muhammad Khan Sur poisoned the ears of the Sultan so much so that he issued a *farman* appointing the former to mediate in the quarrel between Sher Khan and Sulaiman. Muhammad Khan enforced partition but when Sher Khan resisted the move, he ejected him by force and assigned the whole *jagir* to Sulaiman.

Sher Khan now sent to Junaid Barlas, offered his submission to Babar's authority and secured sufficient military aid to overpower Sulaiman and occupy the *jagir*. Sher Khan goes to Babar once again. He now sent back the Mughal soldiers and started for Agra to wait upon Babar, who was greatly impressed by his demeanour and enrolled him among his followers in the hope of utilizing his services in the subjugation of the Nuhanis, but he also warned Mir Khalifa thus : "This Afghan is not to be disconcerted by trifles; he may come to be a great man yet. . . . Keep an eye on Sher Khan. He is a clever man, and the marks of royalty are visible on his forehead".

Sher Khan entered the service of Babar towards the end of 1527 and since then to the battle of Dadrah in 1532, he had followed a tortuous diplomacy, sometimes deserting to the Afghans and then again turning against them as a partisan of Babar or Humayun. This had paid him rich dividends and he had emerged as the most powerful man among the Afghans. Sher Khan's conduct appeared to be guided by three considerations. In the first place, he did not want to antagonise the Timurids and specially Babar. Secondly, he had no faith in the success of the Afghan revolts but joined them willy-nilly to escape the wrath and odium of the Afghans. Thirdly, he wished the defeat of Afghan chiefs whom he considered incompetent and vain so that he might assume the leadership of the Afghan soldiery and lead them to victory against the Timurid usurpers.

Sher Khan feared the Afghans might curse him for having introduced the Timurids into Bihar. But when during the Afghan rising in 1528, Babar adopted a generous attitude towards the ruler of Bihar and added to the *jagir* of Sher Khan because of the latter's prudent policy, Muhammad Shah and after his death, his wife Dudu realized the utility of keeping Sher Khan in good humour. Consequently, he became more powerful in Bihar than ever before. Constant defeats of the older nobility gradually paved the ground for Sher Khan's eventual ascendancy. But it was the Nuhani conspiracy that helped him the most. As regent, Sher Khan started governing with a strong hand. He exercised a rigorous control over the local officers, had their accounts audited, punished all cases of oppression and misrule and in the administration of justice showed no consideration for rank or birth. Hence the Nuhani nobles as a body became hostile. Jalal was also growing up and wanted to curb the power of the regent and to assume authority himself. But he was not strong enough to dismiss Sher Khan. The latter was the head of the army and had a strong following of his own. Besides, he was all caution in his movements. Hence it was impossible to bring about his murder, nor could his power be destroyed by seeking the aid of the Timurids because he had already ingratiated himself in their favour. Besides, it would have been no pleasant task to lean on the support of the enemies of the Afghan race. Hence it was only from Nusrat Shah, the ruler of Bengal that they could secure some assistance.

They sought his assistance in emancipating Bihar from the domination of Sher Khan. Nusrat Shah was already the master of North Bihar where Makhdum Alam was posted as *higos ver-nor*. He now sent an army under Qutb Khan in the hope of establishing his power over South Bihar as well, but Sher Khan defeated the Bengal army and captured a large booty and thus strengthened his position still more. This quietened the Nuhanis for the time being.

Nusrat Shah now sent an army to punish Makhdum Alam for failure to support Qutb Khan. Makhdum sought the assistance of Sher Khan who lent him the aid of a contingent of troops. Makhdum was so assured of Sher Khan's friendship that he sent him all his treasure as a precautionary measure which Sher Khan was able to secure for himself because Makhdum was killed fighting against his master. Sher Khan now became not only the strongest but the richest Afghan chief.

The Nuhanis made an unsuccessful attempt to murder him and when they were sent against Nusrat Shah they deserted to him. Nusrat Shah's army was defeated by Sher Khan. This put an end to the ambitions of the ruler of Bengal and finished the political career of Jalaluddin. Sher Khan now became the

undisputed master of Bihar. All this transpired between 1529-1530.

All this accession in strength stiffened the attitude of Sher Khan towards the Timurids. In the reign of Babar, he had been guilty of defiance once when he had left Chanderi without permission. But after the accession of Humayun his behaviour could be interpreted as uniformly defiant. This made Humayun dissatisfied with him and he tried to assert his sovereignty. Sher Khan apparently remained loyal and respectful but he never yielded a point to Humayun. The latter tried to enforce obedience at the point of the sword but in this he did not succeed which made Sher Khan all the more ambitious day by day. He continued to build his power with great assiduity and when he found Humayun weak, he delivered a powerful attack and succeeded in rolling the Timurids back to Afghanistan. He followed this up by founding a second Afghan Empire in India. Thus in the reign of Humayun, the Afghan counter-offensive was buttressed with shrewd diplomacy and finally proved irresistible.

Humayun had hoped to enhance his prestige and extend his territory by the annexation of Kalinjar. But he had to return without securing the fort. This was an index of his military weakness and lack of determination. He repeated the same thing in relation to Chunar. Ibrahim had located the principal treasury of the empire at Chunar and had appointed Taj Khan Sarangkani as its governor. On Ibrahim's death, Taj Khan had transferred his allegiance to Babar who had placed him under the supervision of Junaid Barlas.

In 1529, the sons of Taj Khan got so jealous of the influence of their step-mother Lad Malka over their father that they decided to murder her. But as Taj Khan intervened, he received the blow and was killed. Lad Malka was a very shrewd lady. She won over to her side the soldiers and their commandants so that the assailants had to leave the fort. Sher Khan agreed to act as the mediator between the two parties. He met the lady, married her and through her influence acquired control not only over the fort but also over the treasure stored therein. He also reconciled the sons of Taj Khan to his holding the fort.

Technically, Sher Khan's conduct had not been correct. He should have sent the entire treasure to the Emperor at Agra and should have sought appointment as the governor of Chunar, but he did nothing of the sort. On the other hand, he seized Chunar in such manner as if he were himself an independent ruler and Chunar did not form a part of the empire of Babar. Babar took no notice of his conduct. May be, his own illness and that of Humayun gave him no opportunity for it, or Babar might have overlooked it on the ground that Sher Khan was after all one of

his own subordinates and he had served imperial interests by putting down lawlessness.

When Humayun became the ruler, he too kept quiet for some time. But failing to secure Kalinjar, he tried to offset it by bringing Chunar under his direct control. He therefore, sent an army under Hindu Beg with instructions to seize the fort and to arrange for its government. Sher Khan refused to surrender the fort and protesting his loyalty and past services sought to know why the Emperor was so offended with him that in disregard to his past services he should send an army against him. He said that if he was confirmed in the possession of the fort, he would hold it as a Timurid vassal and would send an Afghan force for the service of the Emperor under his son Qutb Khan. Hindu Beg promised to forward his request to the Emperor but advised him to comply with his orders by surrendering the fort for the time being. To this Sher Khan did not agree. Hence Humayun himself marched at the head of an army and laid a close siege to the fort, when he was informed of a fresh revolt by Muhammad Zaman Mirza. Bahadur Shah of Gujerat also had his eye on Delhi and was besieging the fort of Chitor. Hence Humayun thought it prudent to return to Agra and accept the terms, formerly rejected by his subordinate and followed by a siege lasting for many months. Humayun sought only one modification, that Jalal Khan should be sent in place of Qutb Khan. But Sher Khan insisted on sending Qutb Khan and Humayun made Sher Khan to agree to reprisals against Qutb Khan, should there be any trouble from the Afghans in the east. This was intended to curb the ambitions of Sher Khan but Humayun failed to realize that it raised the status of Sher Khan from a vassal to a leader of the Afghans in the east. Sher Khan's self-confidence greatly increased because he had been able to retain Chunar by setting at naught all the efforts of Humayun. This was Humayun's second blunder. He should have either left Sher Khan alone or if he had intervened he should have crushed him thoroughly just then because he had not yet become very powerful.

It was the fear of the rising power of Bahadur Shah that had called Humayun back to Agra. From 1534 to 1536, Humayun Relations with could not interfere with Sher Khan. Bahadur Bahadur Shah of Shah was accumulating a steep rise in power and dominion and favoured an axis with Gujerat Sher Khan to plan a simultaneous attack on Humayun both from the east and the west so that the latter may not employ his full strength against any of them. Sher Khan met the envoy with studied courtesy but had no intention of pulling chestnuts out of fire for the benefit of Bahadur Shah.

Bahadur Shah had allied himself with Rana Ratna Singh in 1531 to partition the kingdom of Malwa between them. In

1531-1532, he established his supremacy over Bidar, Khandesh and Ahmadnagar and in 1533 he began by capturing Ranthambhor and ended by laying siege to Chitor. Rani Karnawati then sought the aid of Humayun who advanced as far as Gwalior. But he abstained from intervention because of the rebellion of the Mirzas, Muhammad Zaman and Muhammad Sultan, and a letter from Bahadur Shah, contending that it would be unworthy on the part of a Muslim ruler like Humayun to attack a brother Muslim Prince while he was engaged in a *jihad* against *Kafirs*. Humayun's lack of enterprise forced the Rani to submit and to cede to Bahadur Shah the entire Malwa territory held by the Ranas of Mewar. Bahadur Shah next captured Nagor and Ajmer and in 1534-1535 besieged and captured Chitor. Next he planned a three-pronged attack on Delhi and Agra. The main army was commanded by Tatar Khan Lodi son of Alam Khan Lodi. It proceeded via Chitor and Bayana intent on capturing Agra. A second army was to proceed via Kalinjar under the command of Alam Khan Lodi. The third army led by Burhan-ul-Mulk proceeded towards Delhi via the Punjab.

Humayun concentrated his force against Tatar Khan and inflicted such a crushing defeat on him that the other two armies melted away without waiting for an attack.

Conquest of Malwa and Gujerat 1535 Now Humayun made a counter-attack and the two armies contacted each other near Mandisor. Because of the defection of Rumi Khan, Humayun came to know all the weaknesses of the enemy and scored an easy victory over him. Bahadur Shah made a rapid retreat to Gujerat but Humayun was constantly at his heels and captured both Malwa and Gujerat. At Champaner, he got an immense treasure as well. Askari was now appointed Viceroy of Gujerat while Humayun addressed himself to the task of subjugating Malwa.

Hindu Beg was appointed the principal advisor of Askari. Another senior officer, Tardi Beg was put in charge of Champaner. But Askari neglected the affairs of the Government and spent most of his time in merriment. Subordinate officers followed suit and thus thoroughly disgraced themselves in the eyes of the Gujeratis. The latter did not want their independence to be lost and their wealth taken to enrich Delhi and Agra. They therefore sent a message to Bahadur Shah at Diu that he should assume their leadership. Bahadur Shah immediately sent trusted agents who were paid the taxes and assisted in other ways. The counter-revolution had started. Askari now held counsel with his advisors. Hindu Beg suggested that he should satisfy the aspirations of the people by declaring his independence and introducing his name in the *Khutba* and the *sikka*, but Askari decided to fall back on Champaner, secure the treasure, and then settle the final line of his policy there. But Tardi Beg refused to pay

him anything without orders from the Emperor. This was greatly resented by Askari and he took the fateful decision to leave Gujerat to its fate and to march upon Delhi and Agra. Tardi Beg was stunned by his decision to surrender the capital and the province without a fight and informed Humayun of the developments. When Humayun learnt that the incompetence of Askari and the support of the people had enabled Bahadur Shah to stage a comeback in Gujerat, and that, Askari instead of fighting them was moving towards the imperial capital, he had no alternative but to proceed post haste for the defence of the capital. Humayun's sudden departure from Malwa enabled local chiefs to reassert their independence and divide the province among themselves.

Thus Askari's treason led to the loss of both Malwa and Gujerat. The climax had been reached and the crash had begun.

Decline sets in 1536 is a dividing line in the career of Humayun. Before it, he had been generally successful against rebels and rivals and had not only retained what he had received but had also added to it. Now begin a different tale. Successful rebellion, unpunished treason, vacillation and weakness gradually sapped the foundations of sovereignty and he had to start on his travels. It is this story that we must now unfold.

The Emperor met Askari half-way who apologised for his conduct and received a pardon in obedience to Babar's exhortation and last testament. Hindu Beg and

Askari forgiven other abettors were not only forgiven but retained in full favours.

Humayun intended refitting his forces at the capital and marching back to Malwa and Gujerat, but this was not to be, because threatening clouds were gathering

Disaffection in the east on the eastern horizon. From 1533 to 1536, Humayun had been so busy with the rebellions of the Mirzas and the designs of Bahadur Shah that he lost all track of what Sher Khan had been doing. The eastern province was held by Junaid Barlas who was generously inclined towards Sher Khan. The latter in the meantime engaged himself in Herculean labours to build up his power and extend his sphere of influence. Internal administration of Bihar was keyed up on a high pitch of efficiency. With the treasures he had secured from diverse sources, he raised a large army and equipped it with efficient gunners and matchlockmen. He built up great reserves of war material and carefully garnered what he had got from the Bengal army. He gave shelter to all Afghans that rallied round him and conciliated them by awarding them post and titles commensurate with their status and ability. He assumed the style of Hazrat-i-Ala and minted copper and silver coins in his own name. But he did not yet adopt all the paraphernalia of royalty lest it should incur the hostility of Humayun and excite

jealousy among the older Afghan nobility. After the defeat of Bahadur Shah in 1535, his status rose still higher when a number of Afghan chiefs who had joined Bahadur after Dadra came to him and accepted his leadership.

Ever since the death of Nusrat Shah, the condition of Bengal had been fast deteriorating. Sher Khan determined to take advantage of this for the annexation of Bengal. But it was improper to attack Bengal without the permission of his imperial suzerain and there was even an apprehension that Humayun might punish Qutb Khan and his contingent for this defiance of his authority. Sher Khan therefore sent a secret message to Qutb Khan, advising him to flee the imperial camp as soon as possible. Qutb had done so while Humayun was proceeding towards Malwa. This in itself should have warned Humayun of an impending rebellion by Sher Khan but he paid no attention to Sher Khan as long as he did not return to Agra from Malwa. In the meantime, Sher Khan had declared a war against Mahmud Shah on the plea that he had murdered Firuz Shah, captured Teliagarhi which commanded the route into Bengal and thus prepared the ground for his future campaigns.

Humayun had by now returned from Malwa. Dilawar Khan Lodi advised him to take immediate steps to crush the power of Sher Khan. But Humayun did not accept his advice. He only asked Hindu Beg, the successor of Junaid Barlas in the east to forward to the headquarters a detailed report about the past conduct and future aspirations of Sher Khan. As soon as Hindu Beg marched towards Bihar, Sher Khan realized that he could safeguard his interests only by winning the good graces of Hindu Beg. He therefore, addressed, to him a letter couched in great humility and meekness. He reminded the Viceroy of his constant loyalty to the Emperor and scrupulous observance of the terms of the last treaty. He also addressed a prayer that the Emperor should not therefore lead his forces towards the east. These verbal protestations of loyalty and goodwill were supported by handsome and rich presents to Hindu Beg. The latter was either blinded by soft words and bribery or he did not discharge his duty with due care and honesty. He therefore, informed the Emperor neither about Sher Khan's assumption of a high title, introduction of his name in the local currency and posting of his troops close to the imperial frontiers, nor about his invasion of Bengal and annexation of its territory without previous permission from the Emperor. Instead, he wrote to him that he saw nothing objectionable in the conduct of Sher Khan. As Humayun's attention was still riveted on Malwa and Gujerat, he was satisfied by the report Hindu Beg sent him.

When Sher Khan was convinced of the imperial inactivity for the time being, he led another invasion into Bengal in 1537.

Mahmud Shah had allied himself with the Portuguese and had secured not only war-material but also expert gunners. With their assistance, he had recaptured Teliagarhi. This was a handy pretext for Sher Khan's invasion. Sher Khan felt that fall of Teliagarhi might entail a long siege and heavy losses, hence he entrusted its siege to Jalal Khan while he himself took another route to Gaur. Mahmud Shah was completely unnerved and notwithstanding opposition by the Portuguese commander, he made peace with Sher Khan by paying him 13 lakh gold pieces. This caused great resentment among the Portuguese who left with all their troops. Teliagarhi was now easily captured by Jalal Khan.

Next year Sher Khan sent his army into Bengal once again and demanded annual tribute. Mahmud found this demand very unjust and derogatory to his position. He therefore decided to offer opposition. At the same time, he sought assistance from Humayun who now realized that Sher Khan had already become inordinately powerful and his ambitions knew no bounds. He was now convinced of the correctness of Dilawar Khan's advice. Hence in July 1537, he started towards the east and laid siege to Chunar. Sher Khan had already transferred the treasure to an obscure fort and had instructed the garrison at Chunar to detain Humayun as long as possible or if he tried to by pass the fort to cut off his communications with the capital.

Humayun captured Chunar in March 1538 and followed it up by the occupation of Benares. Resting the army awhile, he advanced further. Sher Khan in the meantime captured Gaur and secured an immense booty from the sack of the city and the accumulated treasures of the Bengal Kings, which was quickly sent to places of security. This done, he allowed Humayun to enter Bengal without any opposition.

Humayun had expected that Sher Khan would encounter serious opposition in Bengal. The local ruler had sought his intervention. Hence he could hope for some local support in his favour. He wanted to occupy Bengal and then press Sher Khan from the east so that he should have no means of escape. But if Sher Khan should be found willing to accept his suzerainty and to abide by his instructions he would not indulge in war. - He therefore, sent an ultimatum to Sher Khan and put forward the following demands :

- (1) Sher Khan should immediately send to the Emperor all the booty secured from Bengal including the royal canopy and the throne.
- (2) He should hand over Bengal and the fort of Rohtas to the imperial agents, and

(3) Should express his willingness to accept in exchange the fort of Chunar and the province of Jaunpur or any other province of equal importance.

Sher Khan did not accept these terms for he was conscious of his strength. It is true he had lost Chunar but he had secured the far more valuable fort of Rohtas by a clear stratagem with the collusion of the minister who persuaded the Raja to allow Sher Khan an entry into the fort on the plea of leaving his family under the Raja's care during the pendency of war. His wealth and family was secure within its walls. He had decided to avoid an open engagement with Humayun and to employ guerilla tactics against him. He intended fanning out his men in Bengal and Bihar with a view to cut off supplies to Humayun's camp and thus force him to retreat sooner or later. On Humayun's retirement, he was confident of reconquering all the lost territory. He had therefore no cause for worry. He knew that he would tire out Humayun by long marches and elusive campaigns and would finally be able to retain the whole of Bengal and Bihar. He therefore put forward counter-proposals :—

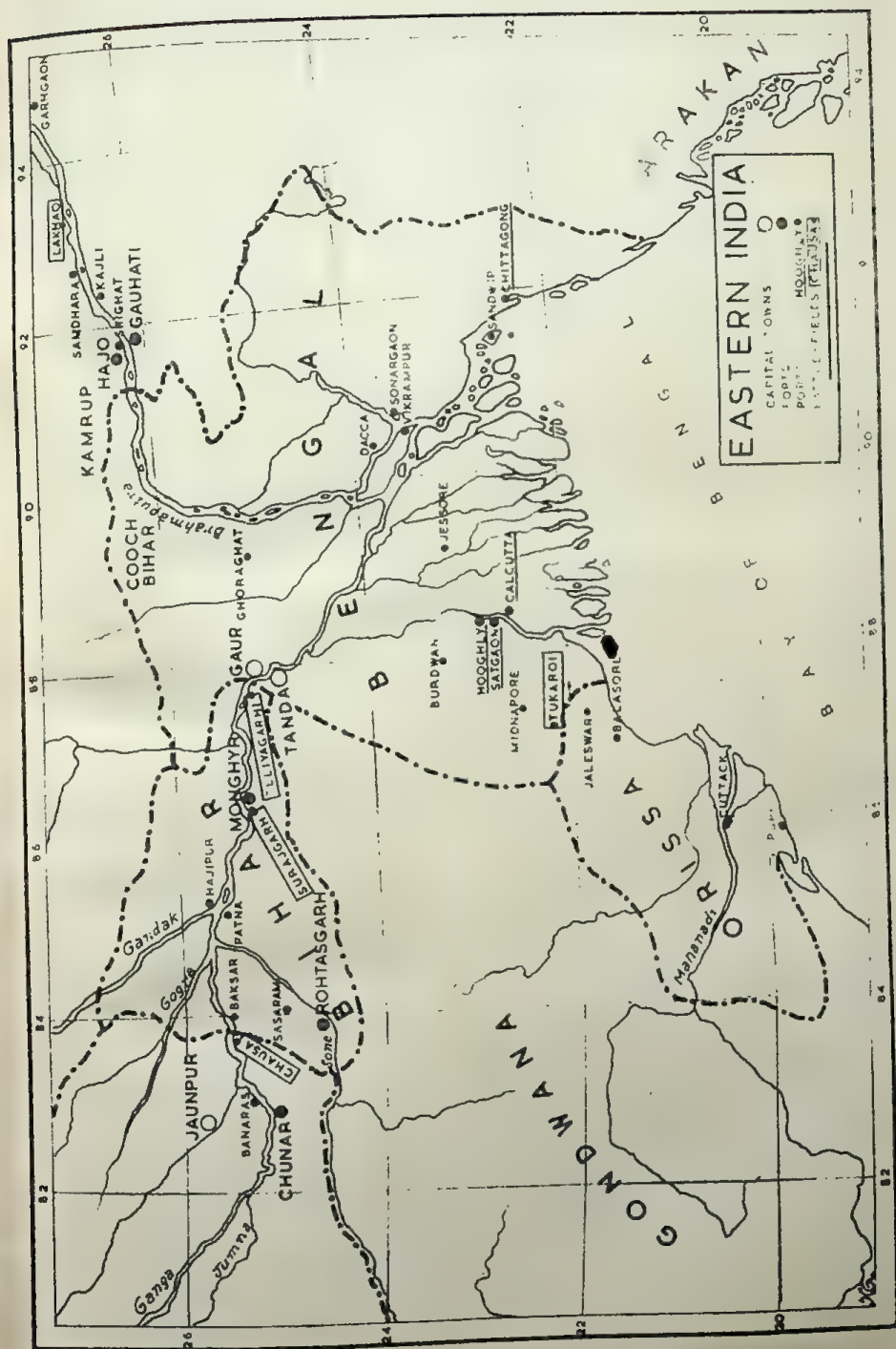
(1) He would surrender to the imperial agents the province of Bihar and all insignia of royalty.

(2) He would rule over Bengal as a vassal of the Emperor, would retain the latter's name in the *Khutba* and the *sikka* and would pay him an annual tribute of 10 lakh tankas.

(3) If the Emperor was agreeable to these terms, he should retire to the capital forthwith.

Humayun did not accept these terms and went forward to occupy Bengal. Sher Khan, according to plan, made no resistance. Only he tried to remove the rest of the booty to places of safety with great expedition and retired to Bihar leaving the palace at Gaur duly stocked with all accessories of luxury and ease. Humayun marched into Gaur and occupied it in October 1538.

Sher Khan collected his principal officers and delivered a cleverly worded speech bringing out his won goodness and the perfidy of Humayun. He recounted before them how he had had the best of goodwill for Babar and Humayun and how the latter had shown utter disregard for this, so that even when he promised to hold Chunar as an imperial vassal he led an army against it and retired only when he was convinced of the determination of the Afghans not to surrender it. Even at the present juncture he had done nothing against the Emperor and had captured Rohtas and Bengal by the valour and heroism of his Afghan followers. Even then he was willing to conciliate the Emperor by surrendering Bihar and agreeing to pay an annual tribute of 10 lakhs tankas from the revenues of Bengal. But Humayun





.

6

1

had rejected the offer and chosen war. This shows that Afghan prosperity is an eyesore to him and he was intent on encompassing their ruin. There could be only one answer to this and he was confident that Afghan warriors would force Humayun to pay dearly for this injustice and disregard of their legitimate interests. This worked up the emotions of the Afghans who with one voice offered to follow him to victory or death.

Sher Khan captured Chunar, Benares, Jaunpur, Kanauj and Patna and he was soon the master of the entire tract from Kanauj to Bahraich and from Monghyr to Sambhal. This raised the morale of his troops who were now fired with much greater devotion and respect for Sher Khan than ever before.

Before his capture of Gaur, Humayun had directed Hindal to proceed to Agra, raise an army there, equip it with ammunition and supplies and start an offensive against Sher Khan from the west. He thus wanted to lay a death trap for Sher Khan by pressing him simultaneously from the east and the west. But Hindal had himself crowned at Agra and instead of making war against Sher Khan devoted himself to pleasure and joy. Just then Kamran descended from Kabul and tried to seize Delhi. But when he was thwarted in his designs by the local governor, he proceeded to Agra with a view to establish his sovereignty. Humayun was greatly perturbed when he got these disquieting reports. He learnt with chagrin of the successes of Sher Khan and of disunity, indolence and treachery among his own followers. His repeated exhortations to Hindal to start his attack on Sher Khan proved unavailing. In the meantime, malaria began to take a heavy toll of his soldiers in Bengal. Many horses were lost because they could not stand the climate of Bengal, and as any further stay there might prove fatal. He therefore, decided to retreat to Agra.

Sher Khan's scouts had kept him duly posted about the movements of the enemy. When he heard of Humayun's retreat he collected his troops at Rohtas and decided to give him battle. Humayun left Jahangir Quli as the governor of Bengal and placed under him a contingent of 5000 troops. Another detachment was placed under Dilawar Khan who was ordered to capture Monghyr while he himself proceeded at the head of the main army. Dilawar was defeated and captured. The Afghans hated him more than even his patrons, for they attributed their downfall principally to Dilwar's devotion to Babar. They now decided to wreak full vengeance on him and subjected him to numerous tortures which at last killed him.

Humayun was advised by his generals to move along the northern bank of the Ganges upto Jaunpur, there cross over to the other side and then contact Sher Khan. But Humayun's

Humayun's retreat
from Bengal

The battle of
Chausa 1539

pride came in the way and he refused to avoid the southern bank for fear of the Afghans. He learnt about Sher Khan's approach while he was near Chausa. So he promptly crossed over to give him battle. But Sher Khan initiated talks for a compromise in order to find out the exact state of Humayun's troops. Shaikh Khalil, the Afghan envoy of Humayun confessed in an unguarded moment that the imperialists were in a sorry state of affairs. Hence Sher Khan deceived Humayun by protestations of loyalty but kept manoeuvring for a surprise attack which he finally delivered one night. Muhammad Zaman Mirza, who was to stand guard had neglected his duty so that the imperialists were surprised in their beds and suffered a great slaughter. Many of them plunged into the Ganges but were drowned or killed by Afghan archers. Humayun himself had a narrow escape. Thus the victory of Sher Khan was completely decisive. His prestige rose very high while his opponents suffered a severe set-back. He captured a rich booty which exhilarated the spirits of his followers. The infamy of defeat at Panipat had been washed away and there were rosy prospects of a successful counter-revolution.

The Afghan nobles now pressed Sher Khan to assume full sovereignty. He said that Humayun was still alive and his authority was still acknowledged over a

Coronation of Sher
Shah 1539

considerable portion of Hindustan. Besides there were a number of Afghan nobles who held high office since the days of Bahlul and Sikandar and had accepted his leadership only in the general interest of the Afghan race. He wondered how far he would be justified in assuming royalty in that situation. Isa Khan Sarwani and other generals unanimously supported his assumption of sovereignty and submitted that without a sovereign it would be impossible to maintain proper control and discipline, the absence of which had brought about their fall once. He should, therefore, assume the insignia of royalty in the general interest of the Afghans themselves. This had been the dream of Sher Khan for long. He therefore accepted their request, a *darbar* was held and he was formally crowned and the canopy of Bengal kings was spread over his head. He assumed the style of Sher Shah Alam Sultan-ul-adil and minted coins in his name. Great festivities were held and Sher Shah despatched farmans of victory to proclaim his assumption of royalty far and wide.

Sher Shah now deputed Jalal Khan to conquer Bengal and on Jahangir Quli's defeat and death Khizr Khan was appointed its governor. Shujaat Khan was left in

The battle of Kanauj
or Bilgram 1540

charge of Bihar and the fort of Rohtas was assigned to his care. He then passed through Benaras, Jaunpur and Lucknow, making due arrangements for their governance reached the confines of Kanauj. From there he sent Qutb Khan to Malwa but he was intercepted on the way and killed.

Conditions in the imperial camp were fast deteriorating. After his defeat at Chausa, Humayun reached Agra via Kalpi. There was a general conference of members of the royal family and it was resolved that Sher Khan must be defeated by whatever means possible. But Kamran and Humayun soon fell out. Kamran proposed that Humayun should stay back at Agra while he himself would lead the army against Sher Khan. But Humayun insisted on himself avenging his defeat. Besides, he had also to guard against the contingency of Kamran trying to seize the empire itself after his victory over Sher Khan. These confabulations were still going on when Kamran was taken ill and suspected being poisoned. He therefore decided to march away to Lahore at the head of his troops, and despite Humayun's persistent appeals he refused to spare more than 3000 soldiers. Humayun could not delay his march much longer because Sher Shah was steadily advancing towards the capital. He therefore issued forth for battle even before his preparations had been completed. The two armies came face to face near Bilgram.

Sher Shah now sent word to Humayun that as both parties were determined to give an open fight, either Humayun should step back a little so that he might cross the river or he should suggest how far the Afghan army should retreat so that he might cross over himself. Humayun asked Sher Shah to fall back and crossing the river encamped his forces on a low lying ground. None of the two parties was in a position to launch an immediate attack. Humayun wanted time to fortify his position while Sher Shah was awaiting the arrival of Khawas Khan.

Delay on the part of Humayun was misinterpreted by his followers as diffidence so that they soon got demoralised and Muhammad Sultan Mirza and his sons initiated the process of deserting the camp. Their example was followed by others. The contingent left by Kamran also ran away. This added to Humayun's anxiety. Just then there was a heavy downpour which flooded the camp of Humayun and made it very muddy. It was then decided to shift to a higher ground. Ordinary soldiers and light guns were first moved. Just about this time, Khawas Khan reached Sher Shah's camp. The latter had been informed of what the imperialists were doing. He therefore decided to attack them immediately. He divided his army into five divisions. Khawas Khan and Barmazid Gur (Vikramaditya Gaur?) led the van. The centre was commanded by Sher Shah personally and he had a number of able lieutenants such as Haibat Khan Niyazi and Isa Khan Sarwani. One of the flanks was commanded by Prince Jalal Khan and Jalal Khan Jalu while the other was led by Prince Adil Khan assisted by leaders like Qutb Khan Banet and Husain Khan Jalwani. A fifth division was kept in reserve.

Humayun had first organised his troops in the traditional manner of the Chaghtaïs but shifting from one place to another

caused a little confusion. Hindal commanded the van. The centre was held by the Emperor and Haidar Mirza Dughlat. Askari commanded the left flank while Yadgar Nasir and Qasim Husain Sultan held the right. But Humayun kept no reserve.

Jalal initiated the fight. Heavy imperialist artillery was still at the first encampment. Hence it had no share in the fight that ensued. Jalal was intercepted by Hindal and forced to fall back. The Chaghatais tried to press him from all sides and to scatter his forces but reinforcements from the centre and the reserve helped him to stand his ground. Now Khawas Khan and Adil Khan started a fierce onslaught against Askari, broke his ranks and imitating the Mughal *tulughma* tactics wheeled round to attack the flank and the rear. They went deeper still and attacked the non-combatant camp-followers. These latter fled into the ranks of their soldiers and even huddled in front of the guns. This disorganised the imperial army and made the task of the Afghans easier still. Just about this time, Jalal also reformed his line and led a violent charge against the other flank and broke its ranks to reach the rear. The troops of Humayun had therefore no alternative but to press forward. There they encountered a withering fire from Sher Shah's gunners. Thus the imperialists were caught in an unescapable doom and Sher Shah annihilated the power of Humayun by the same tactics which Babar had used to destroy the power of the Afghans at Panipat. The imperialists were hemmed in from all sides, their guns were rendered useless by their own men and their defeat was complete. Humayun and other generals somehow escaped slaughter and fled towards Agra but this time the Afghans were constantly at their heels.

Sher Shah went to Kanauj and from there sent Shujaat Khan for the conquest of Gwalior. Barmazid Gur led the pursuit party and he had instructions to capture

Sher Shah captures
Delhi and Agra

Humayun only if it were possible without serious fighting. Nasir Khan Nuhani was deputed to occupy Sambhal and Delhi. Pursuit by Barmazid frightened all Timurid princes including the Emperor out of the capital and its environs and they all fled to Lahore. Whatever they could carry in that State of hurry and confusion was taken and the rest was left behind. Barmazid entered Agra in triumph while Nasir Khan re-established Afghan supremacy at Delhi and Sambhal. The conquest of Gwalior took almost a year but it finally submitted to the authority of Sher Shah. Sher Shah entered Agra on June 10, 1540 and was formally crowned as the Emperor of Hindustan. The second Afghan Empire in India had thus been founded.

Sher Shah now proceeded to settle the conquered lands. Isa Khan was appointed governor of the entire region from

Delhi to Lucknow with headquarters at Sambhal. Khawas Khan was now associated with Barmazid Gur in the pursuit of Humayun and was to hold the land between the Sutlej and the Jumna. When Sher Shah entered the Punjab, Humayun made a pathetic appeal to be left alone in the Punjab on promise of non-interference in the rest of Sher Shah's territory. But Sher Shah remarked that he had left him Kabul and he should go there.

All the Timurid princes then met together to take stock of the situation and to decide their future course of action. Even in this hour of adversity and extreme peril their mutual jealousies and dissensions did not end. The conduct of Kamran was so provocative that it was twice seriously proposed that he should be executed or assassinated. He entered into secret negotiations with Sher Shah and promised to render him signal service by thwarting the plans of Humayun if he allowed him to retain the Punjab. Humayun, as ever, showed no strength of will which caused resentment. Haidar Mirza proposed invasion of Kashmir while Hindal proposed conquest of Bhakkar and Gujerat. Humayun preferred going back to Badakhshan but Kamran would not let him go to Kabul and as he was neither strong enough to force his passage despite his opposition nor prudent enough to sanction his death, it had to be abandoned. Finally, Kamran went away to Kabul, but Humayun remained undecided and pressure by the Afghans became insistent. Hence Lahore was evacuated and after another period of vacillation everyone was permitted to do what he thought best.

Sher Shah occupied Lahore in November 1540. Khawas Khan, Haibat Khan and other Afghan generals soon occupied the rest of the Punjab and the Timurid princes moved away in different directions. Mirza Haidar Dughlat entered Kashmir and established his authority there. Kamran went away to Kabul and was followed by Askari whom he sent away to govern Qandahar. Hindal first went to Sindh and finally joined Kamran. Humayun tried to hang on in India till July 1543, seeking in vain to get a foothold in Sindh, Jaisalmer or Marwar and finally left for Persia, leaving Sher Shah complete master of the situation in India.

Successive defeats of the Afghans at Panipat, Khanua, Jajmau, Gogra and Dadra had convinced them of the futility of their efforts to resuscitate the power of the Afghans. Willy-nilly, they had been forced to recognize the authority of the Timurids as an accomplished fact. But Sher Shah unsettled the settled fact and brought within the realm of possibility what had appeared impossible. He was able to achieve this by combining astute diplomacy with vigorous

Expulsion of Humayun from India

Causes of the expulsion of Humayun.
Personality of Sher Shah.

militarism and exemplary government. He consistently maintained an attitude of apparent humility and submission. He even pretended that he was opposed to Afghan aspirations and a loyal servant of the Timurids. He conducted himself in such a manner that on the one hand he deceived Babar and Humayun and on the other encompassed the ruin of the incompetent champions of Lodi monarchy so that he could stand out as the sole protector of the Afghans. In pursuing his aim he kept ethics and morality apart and unhesitatingly adopted all means that could serve his end. He first courted the aid of Babar against the Nuhanis, then fled from his camp to escape to the east. He would often participate in Afghan counter-offensives but as soon as he was convinced of defeat, he turned traitor as an aid to his diplomacy and secured favours from the enemy. Thus he first made himself the master of Bihar and during Humayun's absence in Gujerat and Malwa planned an invasion of Bengal paying a hush money to Hindu Beg so that the Emperor might not come too soon. Once he was convinced of the relative weakness of Humayun he delivered two sharp blows at Chausa and Bilgram and ended by hounding him out not only of Agra and Delhi but also of the Punjab. When Maldeva of Marwar contemplated championing the cause of Humayun he intimidated him into inactivity and dangled before him the bait of a reward if he captured and surrendered the Emperor to him. This deprived Humayun of all possibility of Rajput assistance. It was thus the personality of Sher Shah which turned out to be the principal cause of Humayun's expulsion from India.

But Sher Shah succeeded not because of his own merits but because of the blunders of Humayun. He was incapable of exhibiting kingly wrath at right moments. His treatment of Khalifa, Mahdi Khwaja and their fellow-conspirators encouraged Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza to rise in rebellion again and again. When Kamran forcibly occupied the Punjab, he weakened himself by granting it to him. Askari's rebellion in Gujerat, Hindal's usurpation at Agra, Kamran's intransigence before Bilgram and his criminal conduct at Lahore were uniformly forgiven perhaps in deference to the wishes of his dead father. He forgot the claims of the living in his anxiety to satisfy the dead.

When in his generosity Humayun forgave a person he forgave all his past misconduct and retained him in a post where treachery could be ruinous to the state; for instance, Hindu Beg who had played false in Gujerat was sent away to report on Sher Khan, where he again indulged in treachery. Muhammad Zaman was enabled by a similar neglect to bring about the disaster at Chausa and the favour shown to Muhammad Sultan led to the demoralisation at Bilgram.

He was careless in his public transactions, insofar that though he succeeded to strained finances, yet he indulged in extravagance and when by luck he got an immense treasure at Champaner which might have relieved his want for many years to come he could not arrange for its removal to Agra or Delhi so that it was left behind for the use of Bahadur Shah.

He tackled problems at wrong moments, and often left things half-done and could be swayed by cheap sentimentalism. He allowed Sher Khan to grow rich and powerful before he attacked him and when he was retreating gambled away the empire in trying to assert his imperial dignity by not keeping to the northern bank of the Ganges. In 1533, he did not join Mewar to crush Bahadur Shah lest it should smear his conscience. On reaching Agra after Chausa he seated the water-carrier who had saved him from drowning on the throne and forced all the peers and princes to pay homage to him.

His postal and intelligence department appeared to have been utterly hopeless because he was seldom informed of important developments except when too late. Kamran's invasion of the Punjab, Sher Khan's invasion of Bengal and assumption of leadership of the Afghans, Askari's neglect of affairs in Gujerat, Hindal's treachery at Agra, strength and motives of Sher Khan *etc.* are some of the illustrations in point.

Between the two principal rivals for supremacy, Sher Shah was definitely superior to Humayun in respect of military prowess, generalship, diplomacy and administrative talent. While Humayun's own brothers were ready to fly at his throat, Sher Shah had the support of the Afghan race, sworn enemies of the Timurids whom they hated as foreign usurpers. Sher Shah's general policy in Bihār had been so free from religious bias that he enjoyed the support of the Hindus. The masses in general had a better liking for the Afghan Sher Shah than for the Timurid Humayun.

By 1543, the cup of Humayun's sufferings was full to the brim. He was in a state of utter despair with no ray of hope from any quarter. His presence was a source of great nuisance to the Arghuns wherefore, Shah Husain Arghun thought of a device to get rid of him for good. He proposed to Humayun that he should go to his patrimony in Afghanistan and offered to provide him with 300 horses, 300 camels, a lakh of silver coins and adequate supplies for the journey. He also promised to throw a bridge over the Indus. Humayun took this as a God-send and started on his journey in July 1543. He decided to go to Qandahar, but Shah Husain sent secret information to Askari and Kamran about Humayun's movements. Kamran could not favour Humayun's coming because that would involve cession of Kabul or Qandahar to him. Besides, he would lose his present independent status

Relative popularity
of the Afghans

Humayun starts on
his travels outside
India

and become a mere governor. He would not prejudice his own interest by being generous to the forlorn emperor. Askari was therefore instructed to capture Humayun and send him a prisoner. Askari promptly proceeded on this mission and were it not for Jaya Bahadur Humayun would have been taken by complete surprise. The story goes that Jaya Bahadur, one of the old servants of the Emperor informed Bairam Khan about Askari's hostile movement. So Humayun decided to go to Mecca via Persia and to spend the rest of his life there as a recluse. Bairam Khan still accompanied him, and at nightfall he advised the emperor to make a surprise attack on Askari and assured him of complete success because Askari was bound to be busy with the spoils of the camp while a number of his followers would surely desert to the Emperor as soon as they saw him. But Humayun's brotherly instincts forbade him to accept this advice and he remarked that as he was intent on a pilgrimage to Mecca it would not be proper to deflect from that course in the hope of worldly gain. He thus deliberately neglected to avail of the opportunity of capturing Qandahar and leading an honourable life.

On the insistence of his companions, he finally sought asylum with Shah Tahmasp of Persia. If his letter were to be interpreted literally it would appear that Humayun regarded himself as a servant of the Shah and that he was eagerly looking forward to having an audience with his sovereign (*i.e.* the Shah). But it was characteristic of medieval Persian epistolary art that the author always wrote in a very humble vein. That is why when the Shah responded to this letter, he referred to Humayun as 'Badshah', 'Nawab-Kamyab', 'Jahanbani' *etc.* while he described himself only as 'Nawab'. Humayun sought asylum in December 1543 and he got the Shah's reply in February 1544. The coming of Humayun tickled the vanity of the Shah and he displayed characteristic oriental kingly magnanimity by according him a fitting reception. Humayun proceeded towards the capital via Herat, Mashad and other lesser towns. He was everywhere greeted with a right royal reception for which every detailed instructions were issued to all provincial and subordinate officers. A special officer was deputed to despatch to the Shah a detailed account of Humayun's itinerary so that he could check for himself how far his instructions had been obeyed. A few words may be said about the nature of this reception. In feasts arranged in Humayun's honour a minimum of 500 dishes had to be served while the Governor of Herat served as many as 3000. Every provincial governor, even if he belonged to the royal family had to go in advance to meet Humayun and alight from his horse as soon as the distinguished guest was sighted. On reaching him, he was

to kiss his stirrup. Wherever Humayun entered a town he found large gatherings of local people assembled to welcome him.

On reaching the capital, Humayun sent Bairam Khan to the Shah. He had been the Emperor's guide and it was because of his tact and intelligence that there had been no mishap on the way. But his impeccable loyalty created difficulties for his master. When the Shah desired Bairam Khan to don the Shia 'Taj' he expressed his inability to do so without permission of his master. This offended the Shah and he slighted Humayun on a number of occasions. But when he discovered how simple and sweet-tempered Humayun was, his attitude underwent a change and he treated him with due honour and respect. Humayun on his part presented to the Shah a number of diamonds, pearls and other precious jewels as a token of his gratitude and symbol of his royal dignity.

Next arose the problem of offering assistance to Humayun. The nobles were not in favour of giving any help because they said, "where was the guarantee that Humayun would not emulate his father in repudiating the authority of the Shah." Humayun promised to cede Qandahar to the Shah in return for military assistance from him. Just then came a message from Kamran offering Qandahar to the Shah provided the latter gave no military assistance to Humayun, and so many people did not favour giving any help to Humayun. But Bairam Khan and Hamida Banu had won over the sympathies of some influential people for Humayun. Chief among these was the Shah's sister. At the same time, Humayun was persuaded to accept the Shia faith and to wear the Shia 'Taj' in order to please the Shah. Humayun was no bigot. Besides, the exigencies of the situation demanded it. Hence he gave in and all obstacles were overcome so that the Shah agreed to help him on three conditions.

- (1) He should accept the Shia faith,
- (2) He should make Shiaism the State religion in India, and
- (3) He should surrender Qandahar to the Shah.

He then gave Humayun some friendly advice and advised him not to be so generous to his brothers but to keep them under strict control. He also recommended an alliance with the Rajputs against the Afghans.

As soon as Humayun stepped out of the Persian territory, he entered the region governed by Askari on behalf of Kamran.

The cities and forts lying on his way to Qandahar generally offered no resistance while at times, he was even welcomed. Humayun sincerely desired to avoid fighting against his own brothers. He hoped, now that he had an army of twelve to fourteen thousand soldiers and was assured of the support of the Shah, Kamran

Relations with
Kamran

would not cause needless bloodshed by offering resistance. He was conscious of Kamran's remissness in the past, specially when he was engaged in a war against the Raja of Kalinjar and the Afghans and Kamran had seized the Punjab and Hisar Firza and occupied them before they had been formally assigned to him. Humayun had overlooked this lest it should lead to a civil war. He may even have thought that as Babar had recommended a proportion of 6:5 in the *jagirs* of the two brothers, Kamran was not very wrong in desiring an extension of his *jagir*. But the manner adopted by Kamran was definitely wrong although Professor Banerji condones his fault and holds that upto 1538 he was not hostile to Humayun. Kamran's composition of a poem laudatory of the virtues of Humayun, and referring to Humayun as 'Sultan-i-Azam' and to himself as only 'Badshah' in his currency; retention of Humayun's name in the *Khutba* and Humayun's placatory attitude towards him and willingness to cede the Punjab and Hisar Firza to him are some of the main grounds cited by Banerji as proof of cordiality between the two brothers. But this view is not quite correct, for whatever Kamran had done was mere formal civility while his true intentions are revealed by his forcible occupation of Lahore. If goodness of Humayun is to be taken as a proof of Kamran's innocence, Kamran would not appear to be much in the wrong even after 1538. The fact is that Kamran was ambitious, selfish and jealous and wanted to grab the largest possible territory and to rule over it in a most autonomous manner. As long as Humayun was powerful, he made a show of loyalty to him. But as his power waned, he appeared in his true colours. In 1538, he tried to seize Delhi, After the battle of Chausa he refused to fight under Humayun or to leave his troops behind despite insistent requests by the latter. After Bilgram he was so blatantly selfish and defiant that Hindal condemned his conduct in an open assembly. Even then he would not allow Humayun to enter his own sphere of influence and in 1543 he even tried to seize his person. Though unwilling to cede Qandahar to Humayun, he offered to make a free gift of it to Shah Tahmasp. Thus the conduct of Kamran from 1530 to 1538 was hostile at heart and defiant in practice while after 1538 it became openly hostile.

If Kamran had been wise and well-disposed towards Humayun he would have avoided a conflict with the latter. But he recognized neither his superiority nor the necessity of avoiding a civil war. He hoped to retain his independence by beating him back. He poured ridicule on his change of faith and submission to a Shia ruler and hoped that these two things would suffice to detach all Afghan, Uzbek and Chaghtai Sunni nobles from the side of Humayun. He therefore ordered Askari to oppose him. Humayun laid siege to Qandahar and at the same time sent Bairam Khan to Kamran with his own and the Shah's letter to induce him to choose the path of wisdom. But he failed

in the latter and was obliged to seize Qandahar and Kabul by force. Askari evacuated the fort in September 1545 and was virtually kept as a prisoner. Kabul was besieged and captured next. Kamran first put up a vigorous opposition, then tried to negotiate a peace and finally sought shelter in flight from the fort. He went first to Ghazni and then to the Arghun ruler of Sindh who granted him asylum and offered his daughter in marriage to him.

By the end of the year 1545, Humayun had once more become the master of Kabul, Qandahar and Ghazni. At Qandahar his conduct had not been scrupulously correct. Humayun captures his former non-Indian territory According to the terms of the treaty with the Shah, he should have ceded Qandahar to him just after its occupation. He had originally done likewise. But when he moved towards Kabul two difficulties cropped up : (1) The Persians were unwilling to risk their lives for furthering the interests of Humayun and (2) His own followers were unwilling to go to war without providing for the safety of their dependants and desired that Humayun should solve this difficulty by seizing Qandahar. Humayun had some qualms of conscience in doing so, but he changed his mind when Persian persecution of the local population led to disaffection among them. Just then the Persian Prince, the nominal governor of Qandahar died. A number of Persians went back because such a large garrison was not needed for the defence of the fort. In these changed circumstances, Humayun entered the fort on the ostensible ground of enquiring into the causes of the Prince's death and charges of oppression. Soon, there arose a quarrel with the Persians who being outnumbered were defeated, and Humayun appointed his Persian Shia nobleman Bairam Khan as its governor and sent a softly worded despatch to the Shah pleading his approval of the appointment. The Shah kept quiet till 1558 but after the death of Humayun Mirza Sulaiman of Badakhshan he started his attacks on Kabul while the Afghans continued the struggle in India and seized Qandahar by force.

After the occupation of Qandahar, Kabul and Ghazni Humayun wanted to make a bid for regaining his lost possessions in India. He could have secured co-operation from the Ghakkars in the Punjab and Mirza Haidar Dughlat in Kashmir. But he could not initiate this move for many more years. A number of reasons accounted for this. The Afghan tribes were very restive and disaffected so that a lot of energy had to be spent in making repeated attacks against them. Kamran continued to be a thorn in his side upto 1553. In 1546, with the assistance of the Arghuns he recaptured Kabul and Ghazni while Humayun was away and though he had to flee the fort in 1547, he went to Balkh.

and Badakhshan to make common cause with the enemies of his brother. Again in 1548, he secured the help of the Uzbeks at Balkh but Humayun defeated him and he was obliged to throw himself at the mercy of his elder brother. Humayun forgave him once again, but in 1550 he rebelled again and with the assistance of some unscrupulous nobles succeeded in capturing Kabul. Humayun again defeated him and ordered the execution of a number of his fellow-conspirators. Kamran now fled towards Lamghan and would have easily been captured if Hindal had been a little more alert. Askari had been stooping the line of his elder brother Kamran, hence at the insistence of the nobles, he was forced to leave for Mecca in 1551 where he later died. This came as a great shock to Kamran but he did not mend his ways. He now joined hands with the rebellious Afghan tribes and created a lot of disturbance. In 1551, Hindal was killed in one of these contests against him. Kamran now fled discomfited to India and returned again after suffering great indignities at the hands of Islam Shah. He was captured by the Ghakkars who handed him over to Humayun who much against his will, was now obliged to have his eyes pulled out of his sockets and to despatch him to Mecca. Thus upto 1553 Kamran did not permit Humayun to invade India.

All Humayun's efforts at conciliation were defeated. In 1550, Humayun had even proposed that his son Akbar be married to Kamran's daughter and the couple left in possession of Kabul while their parents might lead their forces into India and carve out a kingdom for themselves there. But Kamran rejected this as he had done in the case of other offers of peace. Beside the hostility of Kamran, Humayun had also to reckon with a possible invasion by Shah Tahmasp. The awe of Islam Shah's power was considerable, in-so-far that when the Punjab was distracted by the Niyazi revolt and Khawas Khan was planning a revolution in favour of Adil Khan and Haidar Mirza and the Ghakkars were pressing for an invasion by Humayun, the fear of the power of Islam Shah so unnerved the Kabul army that it refused to advance into India and only the death of Islam Shah removed that obstacle.

The Sur Empire was in a process of disintegration when Humayun invaded the Punjab. After the death of Islam Shah his son Firuz Shah had been murdered by his maternal uncle Mubariz Khan who ascended the throne as Muhammad Adil Shah. His conduct was disapproved by many nobles who raised the standard of revolt. Two of them belonged to the royal family and they temporarily occupied the capital itself under the style of Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah. Baz Bahadur in Malwa and Taj Khan Kirrani in Bengal also declared their independence. Adil Shah was unable to suppress any of them. It was in such circumstances that Humayun stepped in and defeating Sikandar Shah Sur occupied Lahore, Sarhind, Delhi, Agra and Sambhal.

Sikandar Shah retired into the hilly tract and sought shelter in the forts built by Islam Shah. Adil Shah also mobilised his forces for an encounter with Humayun but as long as the latter was alive he secured no success.

Humayun was planning an offensive towards the east and also contemplating certain administrative reforms. Just about that time one day he heard the call for the evening prayer while in his library. Making a hurried descent down the stairs his foot slipped and he tumbled and sustained a severe injury which proved fatal. Lanepoole humorously remarks that he had tumbled all his life and now tumbled out of it.

Death of Humayun
1556

Humayun died a quarter of a century after his first coronation. If he had continued to rule over India throughout this period, the roots of the Timurid dynasty would have been considerably strengthened. But he had to contend from the very outset against enemies, rebels and traitorous kinsmen. This had deprived him of his possessions in India and he had to seek shelter in foreign lands. Humayun was himself largely responsible for this mishap but adverse circumstances also conspired against him. In spite of all this, he never lost faith in himself. Some of his followers, specially Bairam Khan, the doyen of them all, rendered him great service and in the restoration of Humayun their efforts cannot be underestimated. Humayun could not leave the Timurid dynasty in India stronger than when he found it. Its frontiers had considerably narrowed down, and yet his reign cannot be regarded as insignificant in the foundation of the Timurid Empire in India. In the reign of Babar the power of the Afghans and the Rajputs had received a great shock but neither of them had been completely destroyed. The Afghans were constantly counter-attacking and it was only because of their internal jealousies and lack of efficient leadership that they suffered reverses again and again. In Rajputana, Mewar had no doubt received a mortal blow but other states were rapidly rising to take its place.

Humayun destroyed for good the power of the Lodis, the principal enemy of the Timurids. He tried to win over the Rajputs but internal revolts came in the way of his success in this sphere. By abstaining from intervening in Mewar's war against Gujerat he helped to destroy the remnants of its power. Though he did not derive any direct benefit out of it, his indirect gains were considerable. The question of Rumi Khan's desertion to Humayun could never have arisen if Chitor had not fallen and Rumi Khan had not deserted, the defeat of Bahadur Shah could not have been so easy.

In his reign a second Afghan Empire reared its head and it took a long stride towards bringing the whole of Hindustan

under a common government. It destroyed the rising power of the kingdom of Marwar and made many improvements in the system of government. It commanded greater public support than the Timurids had ever had so far. Its decline was therefore the least likely. But fortunately for Humayun the racial faults of the Afghans reasserted themselves and the policy of Islam Shah shook the Sur Empire to its foundations. When Humayun defeated the Surs and reoccupied Delhi, Agra and Lahore, the masses got the feeling that the Afghans were no more destined to rule over India and that the Timurids were under a lucky star. Thus, he may not have eased the task of his successor in the military sphere but he certainly strengthened the moral base of his authority. His expulsion proved a boon to the Timurids inasmuch as they could profit by the wonderful reforms of Sher Shah. Regaining a lost empire was in itself no mean achievement. He thus made it possible for the empire founded by Babar to have the services of Akbar. He rendered a signal service to his dynasty by appointing Bairam Khan as the regent of his son Akbar for as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, the credit for overcoming the dangers and consolidating his power in the early years of Akbar's reign must go to him. The reign of Humayun was not devoid of a moral lesson. Generosity to the wicked, even though they may be one's kith and kin is never conducive to the good of the State. Where two powers contend for supremacy, a third power can destroy one by allying itself with the other but failure to secure the support of either of them renders its authority extremely precarious.

Humayun failed to uphold the dignity of his royal house. Failing to extend his hand of protection and aid to the Rani of Mewar, he offended against rules of chivalry. Loss of Indian Empire did not entail so much humiliation as his propensity to seek aid from any and everybody. He began by begging the Punjab of Sher Shah but the latter summarily rejected his prayer and asked him to go to Kabul where he promised to let him alone. He then went about begging favours of the rulers of Jaisalmer, Marwar *etc.* but lacked the courage and dignity to assert his sovereign authority by seizing Kabul or Qandahar by force while there was still time for it. Similarly in 1543, instead of seizing Qandahar by surprising Askari he cowardly decided to leave his infant son in the lurch and to spend his days at Mecca. He paid for his stay in Persia by offering to the Shah a number of precious jewels but by accepting Shiaism and agreeing to make it the state religion in India, he virtually accepted the vassalage of the Shah. This too, greatly compromised the dignity of his dynasty although Babar had accepted a similar treaty on the eve of his third occupation of Samarqand. Despite repeated revolts by Kamran he did not blind him till he had not disgraced the name of Babar by presenting himself as a suppliant

before Islam Shah. For all this, Humayun must be held responsible. The charm of his personal character and his success in regaining a foothold in India are the only redeeming features and it is for that reason that instead of being dubbed a failure he often described as a luckless monarch.

Humayun excelled more in human qualities than in kingly virtues. He was urbane, crude, generous, affable, forgiving and a lover of talent. He loved the company of saints and scholars and his hankering for spiritual advancement was so great that he would occasionally tire of royal pleasures and express a strong desire to lead the life of a dervish. He was affectionate, courteous and kind to all his people and abstained from interfering in their religious views. He treated loyal and faithful servants like friends or sons. He was deeply interested in religious and philosophical problems but he was no bigot or a fanatic. He did not lack courage or personal valour but was wanting in resolution, restraint, foresight and capacity to inflict severe punishment when situation demanded it. His knowledge of astrology and superstitious nature blunted his enterprise. He was credulous enough to repose confidence in everybody and was so swayed by emotions that he overstepped the bounds of propriety. He would sometimes sacrifice security to vanity and at other times tamely suffer humiliation. As a general he was only a mediocrity. He had enterprise, courage, patience and self-confidence but he possessed neither foresight nor the capacity to detect the weakness of the enemy or to conceal his own. Nor was he capable of reaping full benefits of a victory or of circumscribing the evil effects of a defeat. He made no remarkable contribution as a ruler. Only, he patronised scholars and gifted artists and tried to make the relations between the ruler and the ruled more cordial. On the whole, he deserves sympathy, regard and affection for he is more an object of pity than of anger or hatred.

Further Readings :

1. Banerji—*Humayun Badshah* Vol. I and II.
2. Erskine—*History of India* Vols. I and II.
3. Sharma—*The Mughal Empire in India* Part I pp. 68—126.
4. Cambridge *History of India* Vol. IV Chap. II and III.
5. Gulbadan Begam—*Humayunnama* (Tr. By Beveridge).
6. Jauhar—*Tazkirat-ul Waqiat*—(Tr. by Stewart).
7. Abul Fazl—*Akbarnama* Vol. I (Tr. by Beveridge).
8. Nizamuddin Ahmad—*Tabqat-i-Akbari* Vol. II (Tr. by De).
9. Dorn—*History of the Afghans*.
10. Badauni—*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* Vol. I (Tr. by Lowe).

CHAPTER III

RISE AND FALL OF THE SECOND AFGHAN EMPIRE.

The dynasty founded by Sher Shah has come to be known as the Sur dynasty. This was the second Afghan dynasty that ruled over Delhi. At the time of Sultan Ibrahim's death, Sher Shah was definitely on the wrong side of forty and if 1472 may be accepted as the date of his birth—which appears more reasonable than 1486—he had already attained the age of 54. It is curious that despite his high talents as a diplomat and an administrator, as a warrior and man he did not secure permanent appointment even as the officer of a pargana till this advanced age. It has been suggested that as his grandfather had been a horsedcaler, he was considered unfit for a high office. May be Bahlul's will to Sikandar might have stood in the way of Sher Shah, for the first Lodi monarch had warned his son not to give any high appointment to the Surs because they were aspirants for royalty. Special reverence for the house of the Lodis among the Afghans had presented a serious hurdle to the advancement of Sher Shah on more than one occasion. That is probably the reason why no Lodi was given any high office during the reign of Sher Shah or his successors. During their rule the most favoured tribe after the Surs was that of the Niyazis. It was thus dominated by tribes which had had little or no importance under the First Afghan Empire. Only the Sarwanis figure prominently both under the Lodis and the Surs.

The most serious problem before Sher Shah after his accession was the threat of a counterattack by Humayun and his partisans. Secondly, he had to reduce to submission all that land which had ever been subject to the Lodis or Humayun so that he may not compare unfavourably with them. Thirdly, he had to make some fresh conquests as every ambitious ruler in those days used to do. Fourthly, he had to devise an administrative system which might entrench the position of the Afghans and lend stability to the rule of the Surs. He wished the people to feel that in comparison to Sur Government, the rule of the Lodis or the Timurids was far worse, so that their loyalty and devotion towards his dynasty would naturally increase.

Among these, Sher Shah naturally paid the greatest attention to sealing the frontiers against return of Humayun. In pursuance of this object, he hounded Humayun out of the Punjab and when he sought the help of Maldeva, he browbeat the latter to desist from rendering him any aid. He left Arghuns alone because they were engaged in a fight against Humayun. Thus Humayun was forced to leave India when he found despair and disappointment surrounding him on all sides.

Now Sher Shah bent his energies to strengthening the North-Western frontier defence so effectively that it should be impossible for Humayun, Kamran or Haidar Mirza Dughlat to enter Afghan territory or to have any success against it. He therefore decided to keep both the Bolan and the Peshawar routes under his control. In the northern part of the frontier region, Ghakkars led by Sarang held sway. They were friendly to the Timurids so Sher Shah entered their territory, set fire to their villages and killed everybody that came his way. This terrified the Ghakkars into submission. After the return of Sher Shah, Haibat Khan Niyazi continued his pressure against them and sought to destroy them altogether. This curbed their power no doubt but their goodwill for the Timurids and contempt for the Afghans remained as ever. The policy of Sher Shah was successful only in the sense that their capacity for mischief was greatly reduced.

In order to consolidate his position in this region, Sher Shah laid the foundations of a powerful fort which he called Western Rohtas. Haibat Khan and Todar Mal were entrusted with the task of its construction and Sher Shah made a liberal grant for the purpose. But it could not be completed during his life-time. It was under Islam Shah that the work was concluded. Under Sher Shah and Islam Shah, the frontier defence in this quarter was so strong and effective that the Timurids made no attempt to breach it.

The southern portion was inhabited by the Baluchis, Afghans and Jats. All of them were very warlike and seldom recognized the authority of any superior for long. When Sher Shah went as far as Khushab in pursuit of Humayun, the Baluchis of Multan region waited on him and offered their submission. Thus northern Sindh passed under his suzerainty. But a little later came a number of Afghan tribal leaders who also recognized him as their sovereign but who also complained of oppression by Baluchis and seizure of their land. Sher Shah instructed the local officers to secure restitution of Afghan fields, and deputed his nephew Mubarak Khan specially for this purpose. He dealt with the Baluchis in such a highhanded manner that they turned rebellious and put him to death. Hence Haibat Khan was directed to put them down. He destroyed

their power by 1543, captured Multan and appointed Fath Khan Jung as its governor. The rebel chiefs were severely punished, but to reconcile the people, Sher Shah ordered that they should be asked to pay only $\frac{1}{4}$ of their produce as land revenue. He also permitted them to stick to division of crops if they so desired. Thus Sher Shah strongly held the southern route as well.

He appointed some of his ablest men to this region. Chief among these were Haibat Khan Niyazi, Khawas Khan and Rai Husain Jalwani. But when he was later informed of their mutual dissensions, he appointed Haibat Khan as the sole governor in that region because of Niyazi majority among the Afghan settlers there and as a sop to his vanity conferred on him the titles of Masnad-i-ala and Azam Humayun and permitted him the use of a red canopy. Considering the special military requirements of the region, he was allowed to maintain a force of 30,000 soldiers although no other Governor in the empire was permitted to have such a large contingent.

Sher Shah also tried to interfere in the internal affairs of his Timurid rivals. Thus he sent a contingent of 2,000 Afghans under Ala-ul-Khan and Hasan Khan Sarwani to assist Kachi Chak in his wars against Haidar Mirza Dughlat. But when Haidar Mirza got the upper hand, he desisted from further interference.

Turning to his conquests. He began by invading Malwa in 1542. Malwa formerly formed a part of Humayun's dominion to which Sher Shah regarded himself to have succeeded. Hence he considered it his duty to assert his authority over it. Secondly, it had been complained that Puran Mal a Rajput chief was oppressing the Muslims. He wanted to enquire into it and to punish him if he were guilty. Thirdly, he had a personal grouse against the chiefs of Malwa because they had failed to help Qutb Khan against Humayun so that he had been defeated and killed. Lastly, he wished to punish Mallu Khan for his impudence. After Humayun's departure for Agra, Mallu Khan captured Mandu, assumed the style of Qadir Shah and introduced his name in the *Khuba* and the *sikka*. He had gradually reduced all the Malwa chiefs to submission so that he could claim suzerainty over the whole of that region. When Sher Shah sent him a despatch of his victory, he fixed his seal at the top of the *farman*. As this was usually done only when writing to a subordinate, Qadir Shah took it as an insult and decided to return tit for tat. Consequently, when he drafted a reply to Sher Shah, he too fixed his seal on top of the paper. Sher Shah was beside himself with rage when he saw this. He tore away the seal, put it into his dagger case as a constant reminder and resolved to punish Qadir Shah for

this impudence. Expulsion of Humayun and consequential arrangements took such a long time that Sher Shah could not turn his attention towards Malwa earlier than 1542.

When Sher Shah advanced on Malwa, he passed through Gwalior and according to a previous stipulation received the submission of Abul Qasim who surrendered the fort to him. From there he sent Shujaat Khan and Raja Rama Prasad of Gwalior to Puran Mal. The latter came at the head of 6,000 Rajputs, made his submission and left his brother Chaturbhuj for the service of Sher Shah. Thus the most powerful vassal of Qadir Shah had turned hostile and joined Sher Shah.

Sher Shah now made a further advance into Malwa. Qadir Shah came to wait on him at Sarangpur. Sher Shah took no action against him, But pressed Nandu and Satwas forward and reached Ujjain. Qadir Shah occupied was greatly impressed by the strength and discipline of the Afghan soldiery. Sher Shah now asked him to send his people to Lakhnauti where he would soon be sent as Governor while Malwa would be assigned to other people. Qadir Shah would, however, remain in the camp till the subjugation of Malwa had not been completed. This greatly upset Qadir Shah. He regaled his Afghan guards with a lot of wine and when they fell asleep escaped to Gujerat with all his treasure and family. When Shujaat came to know of this, he gave him a hot pursuit but to no purpose. The whole of Qadir's possessions passed into the hands of Sher Shah. Similarly, Muin Khan, the ruler of Satwas was also set aside and replaced by Afghan officers.

Arrangements were now made for the government of Malwa. Haji Khan with his headquarters at Dhar was appointed the Faujdar of the province while Shujaat Khan Settlement of at Satwas, Darya Khan at Ujjain, Alam Malwa Khan at Sarangpur and Puran Mal at Raisin, Bhilsa and Chanderi were to serve under him. On Sher Shah's return, Qadir Shah and Nasir Khan brother of Muin Khan started hostilities again to get back their possessions but they were both beaten back by Shujaat Khan. Sher Shah was greatly pleased to hear this and he now assigned the whole of Malwa to Shujaat Khan. He was also directed to maintain a contingent of 12,000 soldiers and to assign Satwas to his own kinsmen.

On his return from Malwa, Sher Shah passed through Ranthambhor. The local officer surrendered the fort and Sher Shah appointed his eldest son Adil Ranthambhor captured (1542) Khan to hold charge there.

Sher Shah had found nothing objectionable in the conduct of Puran Mal and so had taken no action against him. But when he reached Agra, some Muslims who bore a grudge against Puran Mal roped in the support of some Mullahs to complain against him to the Sultan. As Sher Shah did not want to offend the theologians he started on his march to Malwa once again and on reaching there sent word to Puran Mal that as complaints had been made against him which could be investigated only at the spot, he should evacuate the fort which would be restored to him along with his entire *jagir* if he was found to be innocent. Puran Mal promised compliance on three conditions :

(1) His Chief (Bhupat's minor son) and all his retainers including himself should have full freedom of life and person,

(2) Qutb Khan Banet and Prince Adil Khan should stand sureties, and

(3) The Afghan army should march back two stages so that there may be no possibility of a dispute with the Rajputs.

Sher Shah accepted his terms in toto and Puran Mal proceeded to evacuate the fort. He was reminded by his nobles of instances of Sher Shah's treachery and was advised not to trust him. But Puran Mal over-ruled them and the Rajputs marched out of the fort and encamped themselves close by.

Sher Shah entered the fort and started investigations. A number of women deposed against Puran Mal. The *Ulema* thereupon gave the *fatwa* that breach of faith with such a person was not contrary to law. They, therefore, advised Sher Shah to encircle the Rajputs, make a surprise attack on them and exterminate them as a punishment for their illdeeds. The Rajputs were, therefore, surrounded by night and attacked in the early hours of the morning. When the Rajputs woke up, they began by killing their women and children lest they be dishonoured by the Afghans. This done, they fell upon the enemy and died fighting to a man. In the confusion, consequent on the suddenness of Afghan attack a number of women and children escaped being killed. They were all captured and subjected to a barbarous treatment. The nephews of Puran Mal were enslaved and castrated to be brought up as eunuchs while a daughter was to be trained as a street dancer.

Before his accession, Sher Shah had benefited by treachery on a number of occasions. But his breach of faith with Puran Mal, on the pretended exhortation of the *Ulema* after his elevation to the throne and in full possession of power to crush him in an open contest would go down in history as a lasting infamy and would ever remain a dark spot in his otherwise glorious record. His only gain was that he was able to

exterminate the Rajputs without serious loss to himself and secured Raisin, Bhilsa and Chanderi as well as the good opinion of fanatical Muslims as a defender of the faith.

Sher Shah now turned towards the conquest of Rajputana. After the death of Rana Sanga, Mewar's power suffered a total eclipse and in 1535 its capital Chitor was occupied by Bahadur Shah of Gujerat. The ruler who gained most by the discomfiture of Mewar was Rao Maldeva of Marwar. He was a very ambitious prince and had murdered his own father as a protest against his policy of military inactivity. He had then ascended the throne in 1532. By ceaseless fighting during the next ten years, he considerably enhanced his power. Although it is difficult to define the exact limits of his kingdom, it may be stated that it roughly corresponded to modern states of Bikaner, Jodhpur and Jaipur taken together. Ajmer and the region lying to the north of the Aravallis was also subject to his authority. This warlike policy made many enemies and two of them—Viramdeva, the deposed ruler of Merta and Nagaraj the chief minister of Bikaner—sought the aid of Sher Shah against him.

Sher Shah himself had some old scores to settle. His expansionist policy constituted a threat to the power of the Afghans. His territory had extended as far as at one stage to the Afghan capital Agra and he was ambitious enough not to stop short at that, but to attempt the conquest even of Delhi and Agra, should a suitable opportunity offer itself. It was with this object in view that he had invited Humayun and had not the latter tarried in Sindh too long, he would have taken up cudgels against Sher Shah on his behalf. When Humayun did go to Maldeva it was no longer easy to defeat Sher Shah for in the meantime his power had acquired great stability and strength. Therefore, Maldeva refrained from giving any substantial assistance to Humayun. Sher Shah had then sent him word to capture Humayun and hand him over to him. Maldeva had apparently gone in pursuit of the forlorn prince but he made no real attempt to capture him. This had offended Sher Shah and he regarded the destruction of his power essential for the security of the Afghan empire. It was in such circumstances that Viramdeva and Nagaraj came to him. He, therefore, decided for an immediate attack on Maldeva, firstly because he could hope for some local support in his favour and secondly, because he could camouflage his imperialist designs by pretending to be acting against the oppressor of the Rajputs.

Sher Shah led an army of 80,000 cavalry, a corps of war elephants and a park of artillery. Aided and guided by Viramdeva and Nagaraj he pressed on the Samel without encountering any opposition. Perhaps Maldeva himself wanted to lure

him as far away from Agra as possible before he opened his offensive against him, because when his army did appear it was found powerful enough to cause consternation to even Sher Shah. The latter could not confidently launch an attack for fear of defeat. If he waited for reinforcements, he might be exposed to attacks by enemy guerillas. If he decided to retreat, his progress might be barred by Rathor garrisons in forts that he had bypassed while Maldeva might start an all-out offensive from the rear. The position of the Sultan was thus extremely precarious.

But he soon thought of a way out or perhaps Viramdeva suggested it. Some disaffected Rajput chiefs probably visited the camp of Sher Shah. Either they or some impostors were made to write unsigned letters expressive of their delight at the coming of Sher Shah and promising desertion to his side in course of fighting. Sher Shah dictated a reply which was noted on the body of these letters. It ran to the effect that if they kept their word, their estates would be restored to them and they would be taken in royal favour. These letters were then dropped near the tent of Maldeva's minister. They were picked up and carried to Maldeva. The latter spent four precious days in trying to find out the traitors in his camp and when he failed to spot out any, he ordered a retreat. Rathor chiefs stoutly opposed the move as derogatory to their honour. But Maldeva turned a deaf ear to all their protests. This led to a mutiny by Kunpa, Jaita and others who marched away at the head of 20,000 soldiers, attacked Sher Shah in defiance of the orders of Maldeva. If they had not lost their way in the sands of the desert, Sher Shah might have suffered heavy losses. Even then, their charge was so violent and vigorous that Sher Shah was hard put to defeating them and was forced to remark, 'I had well nigh lost the empire of Hindustan for a mere handful of millets.'

Now Sher Shah pursued Maldeva. He had no alternative but to rue his decision and speed up his retreat. Ajmer, Jodhpur, Nagor, Merta and all other principal forts and towns fell to the invader and the whole of Maldeva's territory except a mere strip in a distant corner was occupied by Sher Shah.

Viramdeva and Kalyanmal were restored at Merta and Bikaner respectively while all the territory from Jodhpur to Mewat was put in charge of Khawas Khan. He made Jodhpur his headquarters but later shifted it to Mewat.

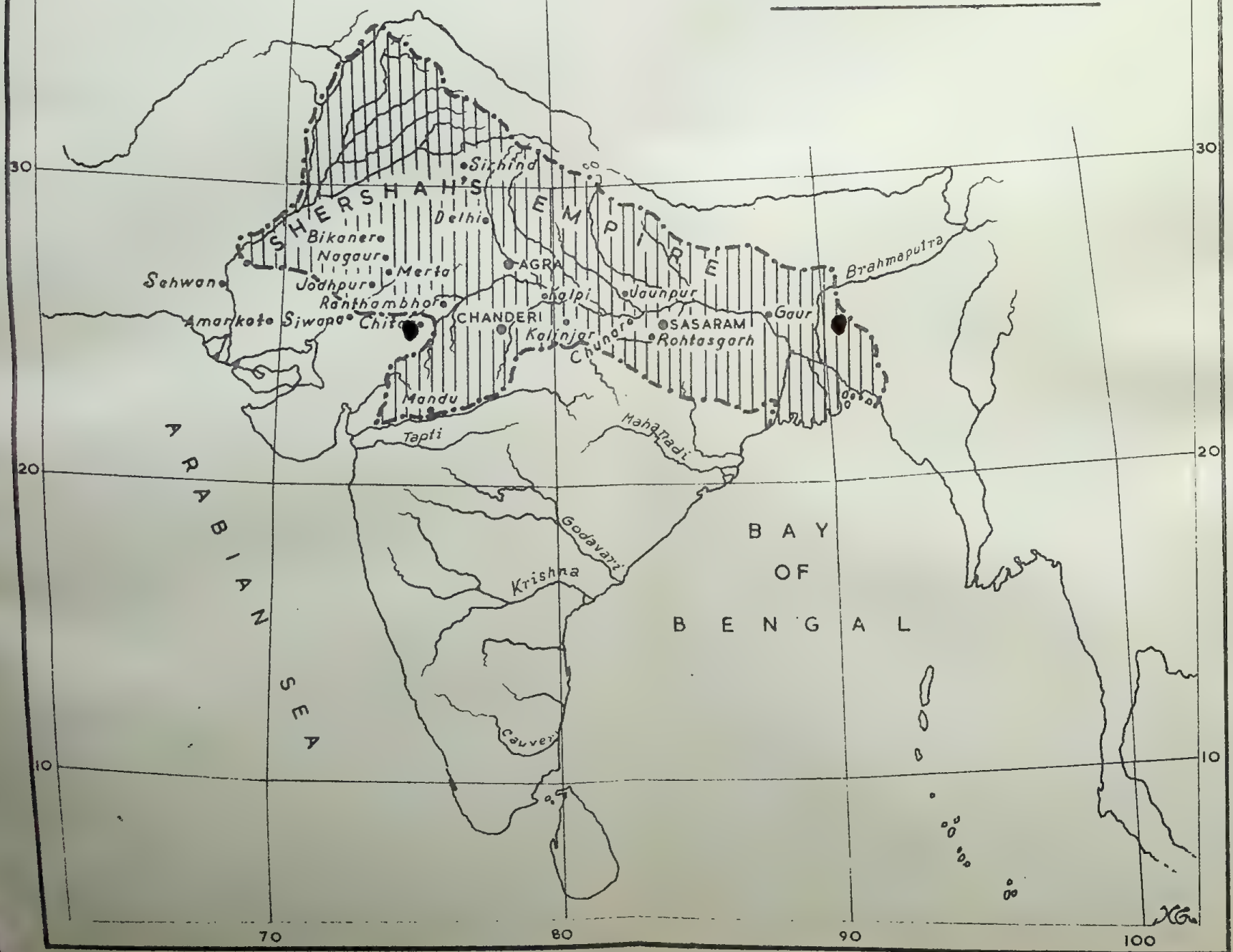
Abbas Khan and Ferishta state that on his way back from Jodhpur, Sher Shah passed through Chitor territory. The boy King Uday Singh is said to have submitted and surrendered the keys of the fort to him. Mian Ahmad Sarwani and Husain Khan are said to have been deputed to hold the fort

t
l
d

s.
l.
is
y
er
ce
ht
ed
ne
nd
er
lly
ce,
le,
re-
ed
na,
nan
the
pro-
on
nge
for

when
idia-
fires
id at
that
truck
et of
ition.
Shah
com-
came
ed at
cap-
peace,
e fort

THE AFGHAN EMPIRE AT ITS ZENITH-1545.



1
2
3
4
5

6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120
121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
129
130
131
132
133
134
135
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146
147
148
149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197
198
199
200

201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235
236
237
238
239
240
241
242
243
244
245
246
247
248
249
250
251
252
253
254
255
256
257
258
259
260
261
262
263
264
265
266
267
268
269
270
271
272
273
274
275
276
277
278
279
280
281
282
283
284
285
286
287
288
289
290
291
292
293
294
295
296
297
298
299
300

301
302
303
304
305
306
307
308
309
310
311
312
313
314
315
316
317
318
319
320
321
322
323
324
325
326
327
328
329
330
331
332
333
334
335
336
337
338
339
340
341
342
343
344
345
346
347
348
349
350
351
352
353
354
355
356
357
358
359
360
361
362
363
364
365
366
367
368
369
370
371
372
373
374
375
376
377
378
379
380
381
382
383
384
385
386
387
388
389
390
391
392
393
394
395
396
397
398
399
400

under the general supervision of Khawas Khan. But this incident finds no mention in Rajput *Khyats* and other Persian chronicles. This makes it highly doubtful. May be Abbas Khan concocted it to heighten the glory of Sher Shah and Ferishta blindly copied him.

Sher Shah's success in Rajputana proved very short-lived. For soon after his death, Khawas Khan rose in revolt and the Rajputs started their counter-offensive. By the end of 1546, Maldeva conquered back practically all that he had lost and obliterated all traces of Sher Shah's conquests.

Sher Shah's last battle was fought against the Chandel. Virabhanu the ruler of Bhata had been friendly to Humayun.

It was therefore felt necessary to suppress him. Besides, his kingdom extended very close to Prayag (later Allahabad). Sher Shah therefore sent an envoy to him and demanded his presence at the court. Virabhanu was greatly frightened and he sought shelter with Kirti Singh Chandel of Kalinjar. Sher Shah asked the latter to surrender Virabhanu and on his refusal to do so he proceeded at the head of 80,000 cavalry, 2,000 war-elephants and a number of heavy calibre guns to lay siege to his capital. Sher Shah knew that the entire tract from Bhata to Mewat had generally been independent and when fighting started at any one place, it generally had repercussions at other places as well. Beside, he had had some taste of Rajput valour in Marwar. He therefore decided to cut off Kalinjar from all outside aid. He ordered Adil Khan to keep a vigilant eye over Ranthambhor, Bayana, Ajmer and the adjoining territories. At the same time Jalal Khan who had his head quarters at Patna was asked to encircle the Baghel and Chandel region from the east. This done, he proceeded to lay siege to the fort. Bigger pieces were mounted on *sabats* and *sarkobs* so that the walls of the fort came within range and a heavy bombardment was started. The siege went on for about three months.

One day Sher Shah was taking a round of his position, when he noticed that Jalal Khan Jalwani had prepared some incendiaries called the *Huggas* and wanted to use them for causing fires inside the fort. Sher Shah asked for some and tried his hand at them. Age had probably sapped the strength of his arms so that the *Hugga* instead of falling within the walls of the fort struck against them, rebounded and fell on the heap near the feet of Sher Shah. This immediately caused a terrible conflagration. A princess succumbed to her burns on the spot. Sher Shah himself was badly burnt while some others escaped with comparatively light burns. Sher Shah's condition soon became critical and all his generals and soldiers were deeply grieved at his impending death. Sher Shah still alive said that if they captured the fort while he was alive, he would be able to die in peace, hence a violent charge was made from all quarters and the fort

finally taken. Sher Shah learnt the happy news and died (May 1545).

Sher Shah holds a very high place among medieval Indian warriors and empire-builders. He was born in an ordinary family, and even there, was deprived of its normal benefits because of the evils of polygamy.

Estimate of Sher Shah

His family failed to attract the notice of the Afghans and he was considered unfit for high office despite his extraordinary talents. But he never lost faith in himself and acted with prudence and courage even in the most trying circumstances. The break-up of the first Afghan Empire, though detrimental to the interests of the Afghans as a whole, proved a blessing in disguise for Sher Shah. The independent Nuhani ruler of Bihar could not defend himself if he neglected to utilise local talent. He thus cleared the first hurdle to the rise of Sher Shah. As soon as he got an opportunity, Sher Shah gave proof of his native genius and acquired great fame as a general by his success against the ruler of Bengal and the local Hindu *rajas*. In 1529 and 1532, he was assigned an important role in the Afghan counter-offensive but he did not get the esteem that he deserved. Sher Shah combined astute diplomacy with efficient generalship in such a high measure that one of the historians has remarked that treachery was natural to Sher Shah. Strict conformity to morality is neither usual nor very useful in politics. The conduct of Sher Shah should therefore be judged in the context in which he had to work. He built up his power by all possible means and finally secured sovereignty by his decisive victories at Chausa and Bilgram. Now he had a wider scope for military conquests. In course of five years Sher Shah captured the Punjab, Bengal, most of Rajputana, Malwa, Northern Sindh and Bundelkhand. His greed for conquest had not reached satiety when death suddenly cut short his activities. Sher Shah's one great disappointment was that he secured sovereignty in the evening of his life. Despite this handicap, his conquests are quite creditable and the extent of his empire was greater than that of the first two Timurids and their predecessors, the Lodis. The disintegrating forces which had come into limelight during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq suffered their first major eclipse only in the reign of Sher Shah when the central authority acquired greater strength. He prepared the ground for the conquests of Akbar and his descendants and largely contributed to the foundation of an all-India empire.

Sher Shah had nominated his eldest son Adil Khan as heir to the throne. But on his death, the Afghan nobility decided in favour of Jalal Khan, although to dupe Adil Khan's son who was present in the camp, they affirmed that they would offer the throne to the Prince who happened to reach the camp at Kalinjar first.

Coronation of
Islam Shah (1545)

The council of nobles disregarded the will of Sher Shah principally on two grounds.

(1) Jalal was abler and worthier than his elder brother Adil Khan; if he was raised to the throne the empire would gain in strength and stability while disregard of his superior claims would lead to inevitable civil war.

(2) Adil Khan was far away and it was not proper to keep the throne vacant till his arrival. Jalal Khan, on the contrary, was available at hand and could quickly step into the breach.

To ensure the peaceful succession of Jalal Khan, the nobles advised Mahmud Khan the son of Adil Khan to proceed to Ranthambhor and bring his father as speedily as possible. And no sooner than he had left they sent a fast courier to summon Jalal Khan, who promptly came up and was hailed as the next sovereign by the nobles present in the camp. Jalal expressed his unwillingness to accept the throne while his elder brother was alive. But he finally gave in when the nobles asserted that sovereignty was not a matter of inheritance but a gift from the nobles to the deserving candidate. He assumed the style of Islam Shah and one of his first acts as sovereign was to avenge the death of Sher Shah by ordering the execution of Raja Kirti Singh and other war-prisoners. He granted promotions to nobles and to captains of war and proceeded *post haste* to the capital to consolidate his position there.

He did not have a sense of security as long as Adil Khan did not sincerely bow to the decision of the nobles. He therefore sent him a letter from Kalinjar and another from Agra soliciting his arrival at the capital. He took special care to couch them in most friendly and affectionate terms. Adil Khan was greatly incensed at the perfidy and hypocrisy of his brother. The only reply that he proposed to make to the first letter was to march boldly on the capital and seize it by force. Baulked in the attempt, he tried to contact Khawas Khan and to win him over to his side. But to his chagrin, Khawas had already left for the capital to congratulate the new Sultan. Islam Shah treated Khawas with great kindness so that the latter readily acknowledged his authority.

It was in such gloomy prospects that Adil Khan received the letter from Agra. He wrote back in reply that he was willing to visit the capital provided Adil Khan's visit to Agra. Khawas Khan, Jalal Khan Jalwani, Isakhan Niyazi and Qutb Khan Banet stood surety for the security of his life and person. Islam Shah ordered these nobles to go personally to Adil Khan and escort him to Agra. At the same time, he deputed assassins to murder Adil Khan on his arrival in the capital. But the plan miscarried, Islam Shah now arranged a formal reception at the audience hall and on Adil Khan's arrival led him to the throne and tried to seat him on it.

Adil Khan, however, declined to do so, offered his homage and agreed to serve under him as a provincial governor. Why did Adil Khan, an aspirant for royalty, decline to accept the throne when it was within his easy grasp? It has been suggested that indolent and ease-loving as he was, he preferred peaceful pleasures of a prosperous governorship to the worries of an insecure throne. But this does not contain the whole truth. He feared it might be a clever trap laid by his sly brother to prove his ambition for the throne and to execute him as a traitorous rebel. Jalal was known to be a cunning dissembler. His generous behaviour could well be a clever mark. Hence prudence demanded submission to the *de facto* Sultan.

Islam Shah offered Bayana to Adil Khan the province of his choice and deputed Khawas Khan and Isa Khan Niyazi to escort him there. The provincial amirs posed as mediators between the two brothers and promised that they would see that no injury was done to Adil Khan. This weakened the constitutional position of the new Sultan and was to cause serious complications in the sequel as would be related hereafter.

The presence of a rival so close to the capital appeared to the Sultan as a Damocle's sword hanging on his head. He therefore sent Ghazi Mahalli with a message to Adil Khan that he should allow himself to be brought to the capital bound in gold chains which the Sultan would himself remove on his arrival in the court, and would send him back laden with honours. This, the Sultan suggested, would remove all doubts in the mind of mischief makers and the world would know that the relations between the two brothers were perfectly cordial.

Adil Khan repaired to Mewat and apprised Khawas Khan of the new situation. The latter regarded it as an umbrage not only to the Prince but also to the contracting nobles. He therefore bound Ghazi Mahalli himself in chains and sent him to the Sultan.

This was an open challenge to the authority of the sovereign who could not take it lying down. Khawas knew it and started military and diplomatic preparations to depose the Sultan. He wrote to the principal amirs of the realm that Islam Shah was following in the footsteps of Ibrahim Lodi and unless the nobles rallied together in self-defence they would all suffer disgrace and death one by one. On receipt of this letter, many nobles turned rebellious. Even in the capital some nobles were disaffected and secretly affirmed their adherence to a general rising against the Sultan. They included among others such eminent men as Qutab Khan Naib, Isa Khan Niyazi and Jalal Khan Jalwani.

These latter proposed to Khawas Khan that he should initiate his assault on the capital under the cover of the darkness.

of night so that the largest possible numbers might desert to him and the capital might be easily captured. But Khawas imprudently delayed on the way and reached the capital during the day. The Sultan sent some of the suspected rebels as emissaries for peace. Consequently, when hostilities began the rebels were defeated. Adil Khan fled towards Panna probably on the advice of Khawas Khan and went into hiding at some predetermined place and died there in obscurity because Khawas Khan was unable to do anything for his relief. Khawas himself fled towards Mewat but failing to secure a footing there sought shelter with the Raja of Kumaon who stoutly resisted diplomatic and military pressure by the Sultan for the surrender of the rebel.

Having defeated the arch rebels, the Sultan now turned towards their stooges and collaborators. He demanded of Jalal

Khan Jalwani the names of his fellow conspirators and asked him to explain why he had taken part in the conspiracy. Jalal divulged all the names but this did not save him, for the Sultan threw him into prison and when his brother tried to stir up a rising had both the brothers murdered in prison.

He now made Gwalior a second capital and stored therein the Ghunar treasures. He also strengthened the defences of Delhi. Next, he ordered the imprisonment of Qutb Khan, Barmazid Gur, Jalal Khan Niyazi and Mahmud Khan the son of Adil Khan. They were all kept at Gwalior and were subjected to death by slow poisoning which overawed the whole class of nobles. Qutb Khan Naib managed to effect his escape to the Punjab but when the Sultan ordered Haibat Khan to apprehend the fugitive and send him to court, he was captured and sent to Gwalior to die of slow poisoning.

The Sultan now issued a number of fresh regulations which tightened his grip over the nobility. At the same time, the loyalists were duly rewarded with promotions in rank and conferment of titles and other honours.

Having thus consolidated his position, the Sultan decided to ascertain the attitude of Shujaat Khan and Haibat Khan

Niyazi by summoning them to court. Shujaat promptly answered the call and the Sultan was so pleased with his entire conduct

that he retained him as Governor of Malwa. But Haibat Khan failed to turn up. He, however, sent his brother Said Khan. The Sultan was dissatisfied with the excuses offered for Haibat's conduct. He, therefore, directed that Said Khan be taken round the prison so that he might see for himself the treatment meted out to rebels. Like Dilawar Khan of Lodi days, he was horrified at the sight of great *Omrahs* of the realm being encased in masonry, lying dead or being subjected to tortures. Like Dilawar, he too fled away and Haibat Khan on hearing his

report followed the example of the former Lodi Governor of the Punjab by rising in revolt. But he did not call in the Mughals. Instead he assumed sovereignty himself and introduced his name in the *Khutba* and on the *sikka*. He was joined by other malcontents and the rebels marched upon Delhi. Islam Shah met and routed the rebels at Ambala with the aid of Shujaat Khan and pursued them to Rohtasgarh. He then returned to Gwalior via Agra leaving Wais Khan Sarwani to complete the cleaning up operations. But, when the latter suffered a number of reverses at the hands of the Niyazis and was forced to fall back on Sarhind, the Sultan then went a second time to the Punjab and inflicted another severe defeat on the rebels who fled and sought shelter with the Ghakkars. But they got no respite even there because the Sultan invaded the Ghakkar territory ravaging and plundering the land on his way. The rebels thus obliged to leave the Punjab crossed over to Kashmir where they joined the local Chak rebels. Islam Shah stayed on in northern Punjab planning and executing a chain of forts in the hilly region surrounding Man-kot. New forts of Mangarh, Shergarh, Salimgarh, Firuzgarh and Rashidgarh were built while the Rohtas fort was completed and further strengthened. He won over some of the Chak allies of the Niyazis and had a number of the latter murdered through them.

About this time, Haidar Mirza died and the Niyazis tried to capture Srinagar. This was, however, foiled by the successor of Haidar Mirza who probably received some assistance from Islam Shah and reciprocated by sending the heads of Haibat Khan, Said Khan and other principal leaders to the Sultan in 1551. It thus took the Sultan five years to suppress this rising and in 1548 when the Niyazi-Ghakkar axis had been formed and Haidar Mirza was urging upon Humayun to invade Hindustan, the empire of the Surs had faced a dangerous crisis. But by his perseverance, diplomacy and superior military strength he not only stamped out rebellion but also kept his frontiers sealed to foreign invaders.

One of the offshoots of the Niyazi revolt was estrangement of relations with Shujaat Khan. The latter had given proof of his loyalty not only when he had been summoned to court but also during operations against Haibat Khan. On both these occasions the Sultan had treated him graciously and had lavished honours on him. But while Shujaat was staying at the capital on his way back to Malwa after the Sultan's return from the Punjab in 1547-1548, an Afghan who bore a grudge against Shujaat Khan suddenly attacked and wounded him. This infuriated his followers and they behaved sulkily when the Sultan paid a visit to his camp to arrange for his treatment. This, naturally, offended Islam Shah. But he did not hold Shujaat responsible for this and that is why when the latter made his first appearance

Relations with
Shujaat Khan
(1547-1548)

at the court after his recovery he conferred robes of honour on him. But the followers of Shujaat remained unreconciled and continued to din into the ears of their master that the Sultan was planning his ruin. Ultimately Shujaat fell in with their views and left the capital for Malwa without royal permission. Incensed at this behaviour, the Sultan gave him a hot pursuit. Shujaat's men wanted to turn back and fight. But Shujaat would not permit this. He was a prudent man and was aware of the fate of Khawas Khan and Haibat Khan. He might also have realized his own fault. He, therefore, decided to evacuate Malwa and seek shelter in Banswara without offering any opposition to the Sultan. In view of this, the Sultan was later persuaded to restore him to the Government of Malwa.

This did not happen in the case of Khawas Khan. This great nobleman had had a steep rise in the reign of Sher Shah by sheer dint of merit. But he committed

Khawas Khan
murdered

a serious blunder in taking up the cause of Adil Khan and trying to depose the Sultan. That proved his undoing. He had been lucky in securing an asylum in the court of the Raja of Kumaon. But his greed for power and glory gave him no rest and threw him into the arms of the Niyazi rebels. When Haibat Khan refused to step down in favour of Adil Khan, he withdrew and informed the Sultan of his desertion beforehand. The Sultan was, however, shrewd enough to understand that this desertion was the outcome not of loyalty to himself but of failure to secure support for Adil Khan. Consequently, a reconciliation could not be effected. Khawas Khan had committed further indiscretion by joining the Rajas of Kumaon and Nagarkot in their raids on the Sur territory. Failing to get the better of him by war, the Sultan now thought of a ruse to trap him. He sent him a cleverly worded message the purport of which was that the Rana of Mewar had become unduly audacious and there was none except Khawas Khan who could put him down. He offered him profuse assurances of his goodwill and entreated him not to withhold his support in maintaining the integrity of the empire built up by Sher Shah. This tickled the vanity of Khawas Khan and he walked into the death-trap laid for him. For Taj Khan Kirrani who had been sent to bring him to court had him murdered no sooner he reached his camp. This act of treachery on the part of the Sultan brought him much ignominy and ultimately proved ruinous to the state. But the Sultan seems to have resorted to this move only because there was no other alternative for suppressing this revolt.

When open rebellion failed, the disgruntled nobles tried assassination as the next alternative. Three attempts were made

Attempts on the life
of the Sultan

on the life of the Sultan but he escaped each time. After the defeat of Haibat Khan, Said Khan made the first unsuccessful attempt to murder the Sultan. Next, when the Sultan prolonged his

stay in the Punjab in course of suppressing the Niyazis; he initiated the policy of superseding the older nobility by upstart favourites, leading to a conspiracy by a number of nobles to murder him and replace him by his brother-in-law Mubariz Khan. An assassin was hired and he made a sudden swoop on the Sultan while the latter was on his way to Mankot. Islam Shah, however, parried his attack, overpowered him and had him executed without any interrogation. He did not even care to find out who the conspirators were, but as the assassin was armed with a sword which the Sultan had previously presented as a gift to Iqbal Khan the guilt of the latter was self-evident. He was, therefore, reduced to his original rank from which he had been recently raised to peerage.

Henceforth, the Sultan became more cautious, and the severity of his regulations continued. The soldiers now became dissatisfied because the payment of their salaries was very irregular: they were often subjected to hard labour and occasionally ordered to haul up heavy luggage and stores. This accounted for the third abortive attempt on the life of Islam Shah. The assassins were lying in wait to murder him as he was returning from a hunt near Gwalior. But luckily the Sultan chose an alternative route and thus escaped sure death. On coming to know of this plot, the Sultan relentlessly hunted down all the conspirators. He wished to order the execution of Mubariz Khan but the Queen implored forgiveness for her brother and when she persisted in her entreaties despite the Sultan's warning that this misplaced generosity would cost their son Firuz his life and sovereignty, the Sultan spared his life. Extermination of the partisans of Mubariz Khan had not yet been concluded when the Sultan suddenly died.

Despite these rebellions and internal disorders, Islam Shah kept the Mughals constantly at bay and they dared not invade the Sur territory as long as he lived, although

Relations with the
Mughals

the empire was far more vulnerable under him than under Sher Shah. Failing to get a foothold in India and finding his way to Qandahar barred by Kamran's hostility, Humayun had gone to Persia and with Shah Tahmasp's assistance had occupied in 1545-46 first Qandahar and then Ghazni and Kabul. Thus during the reign of Islam Shah, Humayun was constantly across the frontier and for some time there was imminent danger of his invasion. Reference has already been made to how he had been invited to invade the Punjab in 1548. But the hostile attitude of Kamran and the military strength of Islam Shah acted as a deterrent on the ambitions of Humayun and he had to forego the chance of staging a come back. Four years later in 1552, Kamran came to solicit Islam Shah's aid against Humayun. The Sultan was averse to doing anything which might in any way strengthen a Timurid prince. He therefore, had Kamran thoroughly humiliated and kept him under strict

surveillance. It has already been related in the last chapter how Kamran finally escaped from the Suri camp into Ghakkar territory and was captured and surrendered to Humayun who despatched him to Mecca after his eyes had been cut out at the insistence of his followers. Humayun then advanced to the *Indus* and was planning to invade India in collaboration with the ruler of Kashmir but his nobles opposed the move. Islam Shah was in his sick-bed when he heard of Humayun's presence on the frontier but he dashed on to the Punjab at the head of his 3,000 personal followers in utter disregard to his illness. The rest of the army was to follow him but the mere report of the arrival of Islam Shah so unnerved the followers of Humayun that they fled back in confusion. Never again did they dare approach the Indian frontier as long as the Sultan was alive.

Another Mughal neighbour of Islam Shah was Haidar Mirza, the ruler of Kashmir. The Sultan first adopted an attitude of neutrality but when the Niyazi rebels crossed over to Kashmir, the Sultan utilized the rebels against Haidar Mirza; later, to secure the murder of these fugitives he offered his support to the successor of Haidar Mirza in order to complete the extermination of the Niyazis through his agency. Thus the Niyazi disturbance helped to smoothen the relations between Islam Shah and the Mughal ruler of Kashmir.

Islam Shah had for some time been suffering from a malignant throat disease. His march against Humayun had made it worse, and on his return from the Punjab to Gwalior his health began to decline rapidly. When he found his affliction unbearably painful he started taking opium as a sedative. Nothing gave him any permanent relief. On the other hand, as the intensity of the pain increased the dose of the opium became heavier. This had a devastating effect on his constitution and he finally breathed his last in December 1553.

A careful probe into the policy and character of Islam Shah reveals the existence of many excellences though not unmixed with certain evils. He had prepossessing looks, a virile constitution and a keen intellect. He had some pretensions to learning and loved the company of poets and literary men. He was an extempore versifier and delighted gay assemblies by his impromptu compositions. He was devoted to his faith and generally free from the canker of malice and prejudice. Self-confidence, steadfastness and diplomatic acumen he had in an ample measure and except on one occasion he was never tormented by any misgivings about his success. He was a bold and intrepid soldier who had given evidence of his capacity for military leadership since the days of his father and had never lost a battle when he had been personally in command. He was, besides, a capable ruler and in many directions completed the work initiated by his illustrious father.

Death of Islam
(1553)

Gwalior his health began to decline rapidly.
When he found his affliction unbearably painful

he started taking opium as a sedative. Nothing gave him any permanent relief. On the other hand, as the intensity of the pain increased the dose of the opium became heavier. This had a devastating effect on his constitution and he finally breathed his last in December 1553.

He is sometimes likened to Ibrahim Lodi because his reign witnessed a prolonged struggle with the nobles leading on one hand to the extermination of the principal ones among them, and on the other to the reoccupation of Delhi and Agra by Humayun within two years of his death. During the reigns of both of these Afghan monarchs, the indefinite law of succession was made the excuse for bolstering up the claims of a rival to the throne with the active support of the nobles. This whipped up such a deadly strife between the king and his nobles that mutual goodwill was utterly lost and each one of these rulers had to destroy the principal *amrahs* of his predecessor and to replace them by persons who proved unequal to the task of defending the empire. Thus both of them badly shook the empire to its very foundations in an attempt to exalt the dignity of the crown. Despite this common ground, Islam Shah was in many respects superior to Ibrahim. The latter was a poor general and he was more arrogant and vain than an astute diplomat. He failed to suppress many revolts while Islam Shah had a uniform success against them all. Ibrahim failed to meet the attack of the Mughals and his frontier defence proved weak and inefficient. On the contrary, the very name of Islam Shah filled the Mughals with such awe and fear that they either came to him as supplicants or felt shy of approaching his frontiers. Except in the case of Khawas Khan, Islam Shah punished all rebels and conspirators for charges proved against them. But Ibrahim Lodi was unable to do this in many instances. The soldiers of Ibrahim were dissatisfied with him and on a number of occasions had no scruple in deserting to the enemy. But the soldiers of Islam Shah remained on the whole satisfied and never deserted him.

And yet Islam Shah had serious faults which cannot be overlooked. He was a little hasty in his conduct and once aroused to anger could go to extreme lengths. When once offended, he could not be gracious or forgiving. Although he had shown unusual forbearance in the Mankot incident, he was generally vindictive and revengeful, and could inflict even the penalty of death on mere suspicion. Thus though he defeated the Mughal ambitions while he was alive, he prepared the ground for their restoration after his death.

Islam Shah was succeeded by his twelve year old son Firuz who was murdered by his maternal uncle Mubariz Khan just two days after. The latter then ascended the throne himself and assumed the style of Muhammad Adil Shah. Islam Shah had appointed Taj Khan Kirrani as the regent of Firuz. Hence he refused to bow to the authority of a murderous usurper. When Muhammad Adil Shah proceeded to the east to deal with him, Ibrahim Khan Sur occupied Delhi and Agra and proclaimed himself king. Adil Shah was now obliged to stay on in the east and make Chunar his headquarters.

Muhammad Adil Shah possessed neither strength of character nor administrative talent. Hence disintegration of the Sur empire proceeded apace. Ibrahim had not enjoyed royal authority for long when Ahmad Khan Sur wrested the sceptre from him. Ibrahim fell back upon Sambhal and contented himself with sovereignty over the adjoining territory. Ahmad Khan now assumed sovereignty as Sikandar Shah. Thus there were three independent Sur sovereigns in the central region. Besides these, the frontier provinces like Bengal and Malwa also became independent. Rajputana and Bundel-khand had regained their freedom in the days of Islam Shah himself. This was, therefore, a golden opportunity for Humayun to return to India. He invaded the Punjab early in 1555 and inflicting a number of defeats on Sikandar Shah occupied Lahore, Delhi and Agra. This put an end to the second empire of the Afghans although scions of the Sur dynasty continued to defy or attempt to displace the Timurids for some years more. Some Afghan nobles retained independent authority in outlying provinces to the east; they sought but failed to combine against the common enemy and were finally eliminated by Emperor Akbar.

The Second Afghan Empire lasted for only fifteen years. Its founder—Sher Shah, made great efforts during his short

Causes of the down fall of the Sur dynasty	reign of five years to strengthen the roots of his dynasty. But things began to change soon after his death. Pride and arrogance of the
--	---

Afghans, an uncertain law of succession and Sher Shah's preference for the eldest rather than the ablest son made civil war inevitable. This led to complications in Rajputana, Malwa and the Punjab. Malwa was somehow saved for the empire by Shujaat's forbearance and sense of loyalty but the removal of Khawas Khan occasioned the loss of Rajputana while the extermination of the Niyazis caused serious disturbances in the Punjab and dislocated the scheme of frontier defence so that Humayun could easily stage a come-back. Islam Shah exterminated the men of experience and ability, and the places thus vacated, fell to the lot of comparatively incompetent men. This made the Government increasingly weak and inefficient. The successors of Islam Shah were utterly worthless which led to internal strife and progressive disruption of the empire, and the curtain was finally drawn with the coming of Humayun to claim back his former sovereignty.

The Surs had founded the second Afghan Empire in India. The social and political institutions of the Afghans thus had a

Importance of the Surs in the history of India	second trial. This brought out in bold relief their merits and drawbacks. They introduced a new conception of sovereignty and effected
--	--

a reorientation of political institutions. But the importance of the Surs lies principally in having produced a Sher Shah who by virtue of his conquests and administrative reforms, earned for

himself a place of honour among the rulers and empire-builders of India. His administrative machinery with slight modifications by Islam Shah was adopted by Akbar and his successors as the basis of their government. When the East India Company stepped into the shoes of the Mughals, it retained the administrative machinery more or less intact. Thus the genius of Sher Shah continued to affect the destinies of this land for centuries after his death. A review of his administrative edifice is, therefore, of a basic importance for the evaluation of Mughal institutions.

The previous Muslim rulers in India had aimed at mere perpetuation of their dynasty by whatever means possible. They

regarded the Hindus as their worst enemies and felt that their arrogance was due to their wealth and political power. Hence, they

Aims and Ideals excluded them from higher offices and subjected them to a grinding taxation. Balban would not trust even Hindu converts to Islam and had no qualms of conscience in massacring even children in the rebellious areas. His policy was to deprive the Hindus of all power and to keep them in subjection by awe. Alauddin treated the neo-converts on par with the Turks in the matter of higher appointments but the severity of his punishments and taxes was far greater than under Balban. He severely circumscribed if not utterly destroyed the prosperity of the merchant class by his market regulations. Muhammad bin Tughluq was a little more liberal in the appointment of Hindus, but his oppressive taxes proved fatal to their prosperity and happiness. Even Ghiyasuddin Tughluq was unwilling to let the Hindus acquire wealth. Firuz, was generally, nosed by the *Ulema*. He reduced the burden of taxation by abolishing all illegal cesses. But his policy towards the Hindus was on the whole exceedingly bigoted, discriminatory and unsympathetic. The Lodis were comparatively free from religious bias because it was impossible for them to remain in power without the active support of the Rajputs. But the bigotry of Sikandar and his undue concern for the prosperity of the Afghans left little scope for ameliorating the lot of the Hindus. Sher Shah was the first Muslim sovereign of Delhi who placed before himself the ideal of promoting public welfare without distinction of caste or creed. Secondly, he sought to organise the Afghans in such a manner that their defects might gradually wear off and their sovereignty might acquire permanence. Lastly, he wanted to strengthen the defence of the frontiers so effectively that the restoration of the Mughals by invasion from without or by rebellion within should become impossible.

Sher Shah kept up the show of conforming to Afghan traditions. But his conception and practice of sovereignty approximated more to the Turkish than to the Afghan ideal. His government was as autocratic as that of Balban or Alauddin but he got it approved by the Afghan assembly itself, thus his despotism

rested on a democratic foundation. Besides, his versatile genius and indefatigable industry enabled him not only to lay down the general policy of all departments but also to superintend and control its execution in detail in day-to-day administration. Names of his departmental heads have not been mentioned by any historian. This suggests, that in the face of constant supervision and control by the Sultan, they had no special importance. Sher Shah, probably, did not want to confer the dignity of a *Wazir* or Chief Minister on anybody, because he knew by personal experience that the ascendancy of one, caused jealousy and heart-burning among others, which often assumed the form of a conspiracy. This was more so in the case of the Afghans whose dominant trait was unbridled arrogance. This could be one of the reasons why he tried to reduce the influence of departmental heads. But it is equally tenable that Sher Shah died before he had had time to re-organise the central government. He seems to have begun with the last rung of the administrative ladder *viz.* the village and had worked up to the pargana and the sarkar level but failed to find time for touching up the provincial and central government. It is also possible, that as the master of Sahasram and Bihar he had been able to fix up the scheme of village, pargana and sarkar administration. But having no experience of provincial or central government he could not make much headway there. This last being still in a experimental stage when he suddenly died.

The structure of the provincial government is shrouded in obscurity. It is, probably, for this reason that Professor Qanungo has expressed the view that Sher Shah wanted to abolish the provincial government altogether and that between the pargana and the centre he wanted to have no administrative unit larger than the sarkar. This, however, is a fact, that the provinces did exist, although we are not in possession of adequate material for its correct delineation. At the provincial level, he made two experiments, but neither of them was sufficiently successful to merit extension to other provinces. The first experiment was tried in Bengal. Khizr Khan, the governor of Bengal, probably in deference to a desire for autonomy among its people had started the practice of sitting on a high seat suggestive of royalty and had adopted certain airs of sovereignty in his general conduct. Hence, in 1541, Sher Shah threw him into prison and partitioned Bengal into a number of administrative units, to each of which, a separate officer was appointed. Qazi Fazilat was placed at their head and was charged with maintaining law and order in the whole province and was called *Amin-i-Bangalah*. The divisional officers though appointed by the centre were to act under his supervision and control. Thus neither Qazi Fazilat had dangerously large powers nor the divisional officers below him, and the possibility of rebellion by any of them was practically ruled out.

Similarly, after the conquest of Malwa, he appointed Haji Khan as Faujdar with headquarters at Dhar while the whole of the province was divided into four units and placed under Shujaat Khan, Darya Khan, Alam Khan and Puran Mal respectively. But this arrangement did not last long and Shujaat Khan emerged as the governor of the whole province. Similarly, in Rajputana and Punjab there were some officers below the governor but above the rank of *Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran*. But this arrangement was not extended to other provinces. Maybe, Sher Shah intended breaking up only the larger and outlying provinces, but even in that respect, there was no uniform practice, the status of Qazi Fazilat, Haji Khan, Khawas Khan and Haibat Khan differed considerably from each other. The other experiment refers to the appointment of deputy governors. This also was not a universal practice. In the Punjab there were two such deputies under Haibat Khan—Fatch Khan Jang in Multan and Mubarak Khan in the Balucho-Afghan tribal area. Malik Bhagwant was a similar officer at Sarhind under Khawas Khan.

Heads of provinces were called *Hakim*, *Amin* or *Faujdar*, and their powers were anything but uniform. After recalling Khawas Khan from the Punjab, Sher Shah conferred on Haibat Khan the title of *Masnad-i-Ala* and empowered him to maintain an army of 30,000 and to distribute the *jagirs* among his own followers. He was the most powerful governor in the empire. His close second was Khawas Khan, his contingent numbered about 20,000, because, as the governor of Rajputana he had to be fully prepared for any Rajput counter-attack. Next to him was Shujaat Khan who commanded 12,000 troops. But in internal administration they had almost equal powers and because of the exigencies of the situation were allowed considerable local autonomy. Other governors had contingents of 5,000 or less and the control over them was comparatively more thorough.

Sher Shah kept a strict vigilance over all his governors and never put up with disorder, breach of peace or disregard of directions from the centre. Even a powerful governor like Khan feared him so much that when he heard of a complaint having been made against him that he did not maintain the full complement of troops, he hastened to wait on the Sultan and offered to bring all the troops for inspection if he so desired. Sher Shah, however, sent him back with assurances.

The next unit below the province was the Sarkar, while each Sarkar was divided into a number of parganas and the latter comprised a number of villages. Sher Shah initiated the policy of making the people of the locality responsible for maintaining peace and security within their respective areas. In the village administration, the headmen had a pivotal importance. Sher Shah gave them a legal status and safeguarded their privileges which shall be related later under land-revenue reforms.

Local Government

(a) The village

While guaranteeing their legitimate rights he insisted on due performance of duties. They were charged with the responsibility of maintaining law and order within the boundaries of their respective villages and made arrangements for ward and watch duty during the night, and to prevent theft, robbery, dacoity, murder *etc.* If any such incident took place, they had to produce the culprits or undergo punishment themselves. Afghan historians assert that it led to the establishment of such perfect peace and security, that even, if an old woman went from one end of the empire to the other with large ingots of gold, none would interfere with her, while if a merchant died on the way, the local people immediately reported the matter to the Government and kept watch over his belongings till instructions for disposal were received. Making a liberal allowance for exaggeration, it is certain that life and property of the people must have become much safer than before.

A number of villages were combined to form a pargana. Each pargana had a *shiqdar*, an *amin*, a treasurer, and two clerks—one to maintain the records in Hindi and the other in Persian.

(b) The pargana The *shiqdar* maintained some soldiers who were employed for maintaining peace and rounding up the unsocial elements. He also assisted in the collection of royal dues and employed force if necessary. He presided over the local common law court dealing with criminal cases and was very much like the modern deputy collector.

The *Amin* supervised the land revenue administration and collection of government dues at the appointed time. The entire pargana staff of the land-revenue department was under his control and he tried civil and revenue cases. Thus the post of the *amin* was of great importance and Sher Shah kept him virtually on par with the *shiqdar*.

The next important officer was the treasurer or the *fotahdar*. All collections were deposited with him, and he maintained an account of the income and expenditure of the pargana. He was below the ranks of the *shiqdar* and the *amin* in order of precedence.

The clerks were called *karkuns*. Persian being the court language, one of the clerks maintained all records in Persian. But a vast majority of the people had no knowledge of Persian, and it was out of consideration for them, that he maintained another clerk to keep duplicate records in Hindi. In Sher Shah's system of government, the administration of the pargana occupies a very important place, and peace and the prosperity of the realm was largely accountable to its efficiency. Sher Shah transferred *amins* and *shiqdars* every two years or even earlier, so that local rebellion was virtually ruled out as an impossibility.

A group of parganas constituted a district which was called the sarkar. The sarkar had two principal officers a *shiqdar-i-shiqdaran* (Chief of the pargana shiqdars) and a *munsif-i-munsifan* (head of the pargana civil courts). The former as the head of the

The Sarkar sarkar supervised the work of the subordinate *shiqdars*, maintained law and order within the sarkar, secured compliance to all central or provincial orders and regulations and exercised original and appellate jurisdiction in criminal cases within his charge. He could not dismiss *shiqdars* although he had the power to report against them to higher authorities and to recommend suitable punishment. Only important *amirs* were appointed to these posts. His equal in rank but inferior in status was the *munsif-i-munsifan*. He supervised the work of the *amins* of the parganas and heard appeals against their judgments. He was essentially a judicial officer.

Sher Shah introduced certain novel features in the administration of the pargana and the sarkar. He made better provision for administration of justice, and evinced much greater concern for the convenience of the people. He introduced a dyarchic system of government as a preventive against rebellion. Rebellions, had generally occurred, because control over the local army and finance was vested in the same person. Sher Shah effected a division and appointed two persons of equal rank—one in charge of finance and the other in charge of the executive and military functions. Both of them acted as a check on the other and so remained loyal to the state. Lastly, he effected greater centralisation by assuming the power of appointment and dismissal even of the pargana officials.

Sher Shah's reign is particularly memorable for his land revenue reforms. He had two principal objectives (1) amelioration of the condition of the peasant and (2) stabilization of the revenues of the state.

Measures of Land-reform. He wished to make measurement as the basis of assessment throughout his dominions. But practical difficulties sometimes forced him to deviate from this general policy. Thus, it is specifically mentioned that he had made an exception in the case of Multan and had directed the local officers not to enforce the system of measurement but to continue the system of division of crops. Similarly, this could not have been extended to Malwa and Rajputana which had not been thoroughly subjugated till late, in his short region. But in other areas the system of measurement was the rule. For purposes of taxation the *bigha* was made the standard unit.

With the help of the records maintained by *qanungos* and *patwaris*, a schedule of rates was prepared and enforced as the basis of collection. There was perhaps only one such schedule for the whole empire. The land from point of view of yield was

classified as good, middling and bad and the produce of one *bigha* of each variety was totalled up and divided by three in order to secure the average produce of land. One third of this average was fixed as the government share. In the case of perishables the revenue was to be realized in cash and the rates were fixed accordingly. In case of other crops like wheat, barley, jwar, gram, pulses *etc.* the revenue was fixed in kind according to the formula given above. At the time of collection, this was generally converted into cash according to bazaar rates approved by the centre from year to year. Thus the rent per *bigha* (unit of area) varied according to the crop sown.

In most places, there were two crops in the year. Hence Government revenue was realized in two instalments immediately after the harvesting season. Sher Shah wanted to do away with middlemen, hence, he abolished the system of assignments. Government rent collectors (*mugaddams* and *amils*) were instructed to be strict in realizing the royal dues so that arrears may not accumulate. As the head of the pargana of Sahasram, Sher Shah had granted *pattas* (title deeds) to the peasants and had taken *gabuliyats* (acceptance of terms of peasant proprietorship) from them. A record of these was maintained in the office of the pargana. It is very likely that the practice was continued even when he became the Emperor and that may be one of the reasons why a Hindi *karkun* became a necessity.

Beside the land tax at the rate of $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the average produce the peasant was subjected to certain other minor payments as well. Sher Shah established a famine relief store to which each peasant had to contribute grain at the rate of 200 Bahloli tanka in weight per *bigha*. The grain thus collected was preserved in local government stores and was distributed among the people through cheap grain shops when famine conditions prevailed. He had also to pay the *jaribana* (fee for measurement) and *muhasilana* (fee payable to rent collector). Sher Shah fixed the scales of these payments and sternly warned the local officials to desist from bribery and oppression. But corruption could not be eradicated. Abbas Khan says that Sher Shah knew that there was no post in the empire more lucrative than that of the *amil*, hence every year or every two years he removed the old incumbents and replaced them by fresh appointment, so that the largest possible number might be benefited. This means, that having realized the impossibility of stamping out corruption altogether he granted it a sort of a royal approval by assuring its benefits to the largest possible number. The soldiers were instructed not to cause any damage to the crops during their movement. He also seems to have provided for grant of rehabilitation loans to peasants at the time of famines.

Each village had a *patwari* (village accountant) who maintained a register of tenant holdings. In *khalsa* land, rent was collected by salaried government agents with the assistance of

the *patwari* and the *maqaddam*. In assignment lands this was done by the assignee or his agent. Each pargana had a *qanungo* who received no regular salary but who had a mine of valuable information regarding the land in the pargana.

Sher Shah's land revenue policy protected the interests both of the peasant and the landlord. He tried to prevent exploitation of the peasant but at the same time he did not completely abolish the traditional rights of the *muqaddams* and the assignees as Alaaddin had tried to do. There was, however, still room for improvement in a number of directions. He did nothing to improve irrigation facilities. He could neither put down bribery and corruption and so he gave it a sort of indirect recognition by the state. Nor did he have sufficient time to check the authenticity of basic statistical data on which he founded his schedule of rates. He seems to have been conscious of the evils of the *jagir-dari* system and yet he could not dispense with it everywhere lest it might cause discontent among the Afghan leaders.

The merits of Sher Shah lie in introducing a permanent schedule of rates, defining the mutual rights and obligations of the peasant and the state through *patta* and *qabuliyat*, adopting measurement as the normal method of assessment and in harmonious adjustment of the interests of all parties concerned. Justice to all seems to have been his guiding motto.

This also applies to other spheres and we find that Sher Shah conformed to the Islamic ideal of making due provision for impartial and speedy justice. He made a number of improvements in this field by appointing a police force for apprehending criminals and assisting the judges in other ways. While retaining the *qazis* of the pargana and the sarkar, he gave judicial powers to other officers as well. As related earlier, the *munsif* or the *amin* in the pargana and *munsif-i-munsifan* in the sarkar tried civil and revenue cases while the *shiqdar* and his chief in the sarkar tried criminal cases. There were *mir adls* who supervised enforcement of the decrees of law-courts, for this Sher Shah and Islam Shah issued detailed instructions for the guidance of local officers. The emperor set a high standard of justice by his own conduct as the court of highest appeal which served as an inspiration and guide to the judicial officers as a whole.

Sher Shah had already endeared himself to the people by his justice, benevolence, efficient land-settlement and effective maintenance of peace and security. But he did not stop at that. He took a number of other steps for the amelioration of the condition of the people. One of these was, provision for public education. The Hindus were allowed the freedom to arrange for the education of their children. Some of their most noted educational

institutions probably received grants in aid. For Muslim education, a *maktab* was attached to every mosque for imparting elementary education and teaching Persian and Arabic. For higher education, *madrāsas* were established and endowed or the older ones received grants from the state. He instituted a scheme of scholarship which was generally awarded on grounds of poverty and merit.

Another important sphere of state activity was grant of charities to the indigent, the scholar and the recluse. This had been

the customary practice in all Islamic governments. Sher Shah made two innovations.

Public charities He diverted state funds principally to help the Afghans and established *langarkhanas* (centres for distributing free food) at the capital and the royal camp. Abbas Khan says that these cost the state 500 tolas of gold every day.

To maintain good communication in the Empire old roads were repaired and new ones laid out. Shady fruit trees were planted on either side of these roads and at intervals of four miles *sarais* were built which soon became the nuclei of new market towns. Sher Shah made separate provision for supplying food and water to Hindu and Muslim wayfarers. The main highways at the time of Sher Shah were :

- (1) From Sonargaon in Bengal to Attock in the Punjab, passing through Agra, Delhi and Lahore,
- (2) From Agra to Mandu,
- (3) From Agra to Jodhpur and Chitor, and
- (4) From Lahore to Multan.

Construction or renovation of these roads certainly added to public convenience but that was not the prime reason for attending to them. They were essentially a part of the general scheme of defence and security of the empire. Just as Balban, Alauddin and Muhammad bin Tughluq had constructed roads and established newsposts along side of them as a means of stamping out rebellion. Similarly, Sher Shah also planned these roads to connect the capital with the various provinces of the empire so that in case of necessity troops might be rapidly rushed to the affected region. The *sarais* served as convenient camping grounds for the military forces, specially when a market town grew up around it. The *sarai* was also used as a *dak-chauki* where *harkaras* and mounted news-carriers were posted for carrying news to the next *sarai* both up and down the road. It was also connected with the intelligence service. Like all despotic rulers Sher Shah too had an intelligence service. Some of these men haunted the *sarais* and mixing with the people coming there collected valuable information

about the locality and its officers. This secret service was an essential element of Sher Shah's defence system. His spies even entered enemy territory and brought back useful military information. Besides this, they had normal routine duties of keeping him posted upto date about the activities of the principal officers of the state.

All relevant details about Sher Shah's military system are not available to us. What we know suggests that his army was principally organised under four heads—cavalry, infantry, elephants, gunners and matchlockmen. According to Abbas Khan, the cavalry numbered 1,50,000. The exact strength of the infantry has not been mentioned. They were often called *paiks* and included some of the finest archers and matchlockmen. Others were expert wrestlers and fencers. They were employed as personal bodyguards of the Sultan garrisoning the forts and as auxiliaries. According to Abbas Khan, Sher Shah had 5,000 war-elephants. The number of matchlockmen is given as 5,000 but the number of guns and heavy ordnance is uncertain. We know it for certain that he had secured most of the Bengal artillery during his wars against the rulers of that kingdom. This had been augmented by gains at Chausa and Bilgram. It is not unlikely that he might have made some purchases from European traders in Bengal.

As heretofore, cavalry was regarded as the mainstay of the armed forces of the realm. Sher Shah had manned it almost exclusively with Afghans. Next to cavalry ranked the matchlockmen. That is why their number is separately mentioned in fort-garrisons. Sher Shah's elephants were well-trained but his artillery does not appear to have been fully developed.

Sher Shah maintained a central force at the capital as his personal followers. This consisted of the finest soldiers in the realm. The rest were distributed all over the empire as garrisons of forts and contingents of officers posted in the provinces. Governors' contingents varied from five to thirty thousand. General rules for their discipline and maintenance were framed by the Sultan but it was left to the governors to enforce them. They were the paymasters of their contingents and it appears that they did not always maintain the full complement of troops for which they drew salary and thus embezzled a part of the allocated grant.

To remove this defect Sher Shah adopted a number of measures. He appointed a *Bakhshi-i-Lashkar* for supervision and control over the army. His function was similar to that of the former *Ariz-i-mumalik*, and he enforced observance of military regulations, and when payment in cash was started he supervised disbursement of salaries. He had a number of subordinate *Bakhshis* under him who took descriptive rolls of troopers at the time of recruitment and looked to branding of horses. He ordered the general muster of troops and personally held reviews to make sure whether their uniform and accoutrements were right.

When the army was sent out on an expedition, the *Bakhshis* attended to all the necessary arrangements. It was a part of their duty to see that the soldiers received their full salary at the due time and that their interests were safeguarded.

We do not know whether Sher Shah had introduced any grades or ranks in the army. But at the time of Islam Shah there is reference to commanders of 50, 100, 250, 500, 1000, 5000, 10000 and 20000 although their respective designations have not been mentioned. It is likely, that this might have applied only to the Central army at the capital. The provincial contingents generally consisted of fellow-tribesmen of the local governor and he was given considerable latitude in organising them as he thought best.

The army of Sher Shah consisting as it did predominantly of Afghans could not be regarded as a national army. The Afghan contingents often consisted of members of a single clan or tribe. Consequently, their natural loyalty was to the tribal leader rather than to the sovereign. This is illustrated by the revolts of Haibat Khan and Khawas Khan against Islam Shah. The provincial contingents were not under control of the centre, hence cases of embezzlement of part of the salary granted by non-recruitment of full complement of troops was not unknown.

Sher Shah had won spontaneous esteem of the Afghans by his personal success. Hence normally he faced no opposition from their side. But strict enforcement of rules and auditing of accounts did cause discontent. He had then to remind them that it was lack of discipline among the Afghans that had brought about the plight of the First Afghan Empire and that it was for that very reason they had themselves insisted on investing him with special prerogatives. In his normal dealings, he treated them with affection, sympathy and benevolence. If they rendered any meritorious service, he lavished great praise on them and gave them his trust and confidence. Thus he had no difficulty with them.

His son and successor Islam Shah was not so lucky. In his reign, disputed succession provoked opposition to his authority, and the native vanity of the Afghans coupled with truculent vindictiveness of the Sultan worsened the situation. In order to keep the nobles under his control, Islam Shah introduced a number of changes in Sher Shah's system. The use of scarlet tents and maintenance of elephants and dancing girls by nobles was forbidden and declared an exclusive privilege of the sovereign. Detailed regulations were issued for their guidance which were expressed in simple and clear-cut language and embraced all sorts

of subjects—religious, political, economic and others. It was under these regulations that the payment of soldiers by *jagir* was stopped and replaced by payment in cash. The regulations provided for the notorious Friday assemblies at the head-quarters of every province and sarkar and attendance for nobles and officers of the locality was made compulsory. A pair of slippers and a bower of arrows of the Sultan were placed on a high pedestal and every nobleman in order of precedence offered his obeisance to it. This done, new regulations were read out and if anybody failed to follow any portion thereof it was explained and made intelligible. Enforcement of these regulations and ruthless suppression of all rebels caused discontent among the nobles. But the Sultan paid no heed to it, and on the contrary, kept them down by force leading to widespread rebellion and strife. The stability of the empire was greatly undermined so much so that after Islam Shah's death Sur power rapidly disintegrated and the Mughals were able to reoccupy Delhi and Agra.

Besides these regulations Islam Shah introduced other sundry changes. Cash grants to students and learned men were replaced

by land grants, so that, assured of a permanent income they might devote themselves to the pursuit of learning with a single-minded

attention. Forts and roads planned by Sher Shah were completed during his reign and between every two *sarais* of his father he built one more and established a *langarkhana* in each one of them for free distribution of food. Each *sarai* was provided with a pair of powerful *naqqaras* (kettledrums). When the Sultan sat for his midday meal, the *naqqara* at the capital or the camp was sounded. When its sound reached the *sarais* the *naqqaras* were sounded and the same thing was repeated so that within a short time the hour of dinner had been announced all over the empire and distribution of free food from *langarkhanas* promptly begun. Sir Wolesley Haig has condemned these measures as an absurd innovations born of sheer jealousy against his illustrious father. But there is not much truth in this statement. Other authors like Dr. R. P. Tripathi have, however, found them commendable.

The Afghans dominated Delhi politics from 1451 to 1555 and during this period they did a number of remarkable things.

They put an end to the anarchy which had come in the wake of the weak rule of the later Tughluqs and the Sayyads and strove to build up a strong centralised government. Independent kingdoms of Malwa, Jaunpur and Bengal were ended and the disaffected nobles in the central region were made amenable to discipline and obedience. It was because of their internal weaknesses that they had lost the empire once. But what is more remarkable is that within less than fifteen years they vanquished their victors, drove them out of the land and regained sovereignty a second time. But because of their inherent defects they lost

the empire once more. The Afghans introduced a new ideal of government and instead of autocratic domination by the nobles they tried to govern in collaboration with them. But the experiment did not prove a success. If the nobles had been a little less vain and a little more realistic, they might have demonstrated that autocracy was by no means an inevitable necessity. Instead, they might have founded a more enlightened government. But this could not be. Whosoever tried to bring them under strict discipline incurred their hostility. Blinded by anger and selfishness they were led into courses suicidal to their own true interests. The result was that they were twice deprived of sovereignty and were at last obliged to submit to the rule of the Mughals. They made some interesting experiments in administration: in cooperation with the Hindus, they tried to found a government based on national solidarity. They were patrons of men of learning and of piety and spent lavishly on amelioration of the condition of the poor and the orphaned. They organised administration of justice to be more efficient and improved the lot of the peasant. In establishing internal peace and security they made the people shoulder a part of the responsibility which made them self-reliant and imparted stability to the government. They encouraged fine arts and during their regime music and architecture made great progress. The Afghans were remarkable for their love of charity and their bounty proved beneficial to the people in diverse ways. They have been condemned as barbarous and uncultured but their rule of a hundred years, disproved at least partially, the truth of this charge. Their rule has left a mark of permanency on the society and government of this land. They settled down in the country and added to the strength and variety of the Muslim community. Certain elements of Sher Shah's reforms have persisted with minor changes even to this day. Afghan rule in India has, therefore, an importance of its own in the panorama of its history.

Further Readings

1. Qanungo—*Sher Shah*.
2. Sharma—*Mughal Empire in India*, Vol. I pp. 131—191.
3. Tripathi—*Some Aspects of Muslim Administration*, pp. 94—104; 298—307.
4. Haig—*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV pp. 44-69.
5. Satish Chandra Misra—*A History of the Sur Dynasty* (M. S.).
6. Elliot and Dowson Vols. IV and V.
7. Dorn—*A History of the Afghans*.
8. S. K. Banerji—*Humayun Badshah* Vol. II.
9. Ashirvadi Lal—*Sher Shah and his successors*.
10. Ishwari Prasad—*Humayun*.
11. Tripathi—*Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Chaps. IV-VII.

CHAPTER IV

AKBAR UNDER TUTELAGE—THE REGENCY OF BAIRAM KHAN

At the time of Akbar's birth, his father's plight was very pitiable. But the latter had a great faith in his star. He had no mere amateurish interest in the science of stars but was regarded as a good scholar of both astronomy and astrology. Nor did Humayun ever lose faith in the mercy and grace of Allah, so that even in his hour of deepest darkness he never gave himself up to despair. Such was his state of mind when after the reverses of Chausa and Bilgram, his expulsion from the Punjab and despair of help from Kamran, he had entered Sind with plans to seize it in collaboration with Hindal.

At that time, Dildar Begam, the mother of Hindal held a reception and a feast in his honour. All the ladies in Hindal's entourage were presented before the Emperor. One of those was a fourteen year old maiden Hamida Banu whose father Ali Akbar was a Persian and a Shia and had held the post of Sadr under Humayun and was, also once a tutor to Hindal. Humayun fell so frantically in love with this maiden that he could not help expressing his wish to marry her. This was strongly resented, at the outset, by Hindal, Hamida Banu and her parents as Hindal looked upon her as his own sister or daughter and hence the unequal match proposed by the thirty-three year old Emperor greatly annoyed him and he made no secret of his reactions. The parents of Hamida Banu were disagreeable to the proposal because they feared that the exiled Emperor would not be able to pay a suitable *mehr* (consideration money payable to the bride by the bridegroom). Hamida Banu expressed that she would like to marry a person, whose neck at least her hands should reach and not one whose waist she could not even approach, even though the proposed person might be an emperor. Thus Hamida did not disapprove the disparity in age so much as in height. But the patience and perseverance of Humayun coupled with Dildar Begam's efforts in his favour ultimately overcame all obstacles and on 29th August 1541 Hamida Banu and Humayun were finally joined in wedlock.

This union proved a great success. Despite the disparity in age, height, family and religious convictions, mutual relations between the married couple always remained happy and affectionate and the child born of this union added fresh glory and lustre to the house of Timur and secured for himself a place of honour not only in the history of India but of the world.

A year after their marriage, Humayun sought shelter with Rana Virasal of Amarkot where Hamida Banu begot her world-renowned son. Abul Fazl assigns this auspicious event to 4th Rajab, 949 H. (14th

Date of Birth October, 1542). Gulbadan Begam also records the same date and she had the advantage of consulting Hamida Banu herself at the time of composing her *Humayunnama*. But Jauhar who was present by the side of Humayun when the latter got the news of the birth of a son gives 14th Shaban 949 (23rd November, 1542) as the date of birth. Kaviraj Shyamal Das, Smith and Sir Richard Burn have preferred Jauhar's date on the ground that the correct date of birth was deliberately concealed and a fictitious one publicised so that the young prince might be saved from the effects of employment of black magic by hostile and evil-minded people. Hamida Banu and Abul Fazl, it is urged were naturally interested in continuing the fraud. Gulbadan Begam also mentions the fictitious but official date. 23rd November was a full moon which alone would justify Akbar being named Badr-ud-din (the full moon of religion). The real name, they say, was later abandoned and replaced by a synonymous term Jalaluddin. Prof. S. K. Banerji has disagreed with their views and pertinently asks why a similar fraud was not practised in the case of any other Mughal prince. He suggests that as Jauhar wrote his memoirs 47 years after the incident, he might have confused the full moon and date of the day of christening with that of birth. He considers Gulbadan's version more reliable. Besides, he points out that Jahangir, Gulbadan Begam and Abul Fazl are unanimous in holding that Akbar was born on Sunday while 14th Shaban (23rd November) was a Thursday. But 4th Rajab was a Saturday. He, therefore, suggests that 5th Rajab should be accepted as the correct date of his birth.

In this controversy, the crux of the matter lies in unravelling the motive of Jauhar in giving a different date. If it be true that Gulbadan Begam, Abul Fazl and Jahangir mention the date given later, because, as persons connected with the court they had to support the official view, the question naturally arises whether Jauhar was ignorant of the official date, and the reasons for popularising it, so that, he became instrumental in revealing the fraud. The matter, therefore, deserves further enquiry by experts. For the time being it is more reasonable to accept the date given in Akbar's official court history.

At the time of Akbar's birth, Humayun was away from Amarkot and Tardi Beg was sent to convey the happy news to him.

Humayun offered thanks to God for this act of divine grace and breaking open a pod of musk distributed it amongst his followers and remarked, "This is the only gift I can offer you today in celebration of the birth of my son. But I do hope that just as the fragrance of musk has surcharged the atmosphere here, the glory of my

Humayun celebrates the birth

son will one day suffuse the world." For Humayun was in no position either to offer gifts or to hold grand feasts.

The birth of an heir did not ameliorate the condition of Humayun, consequently, he finally decided to leave India for Qandahar. But when he learnt of the hostile intentions of Askari, he turned away to Persia, leaving the infant prince behind. Akbar was at this time two years old and Hamida Banu could, therefore, leave him behind. She decided to accompany Humayun to Persia because the infant prince was really under the care of nurses; there was, besides, the danger of her being thrown into prison on falling a captive into the hands of Askari. They could not carry the infant to Persia because of the intense cold; therefore, they took the chance that since Askari's wife had no son of her own she might tend the royal prince with all maternal care and affection. Jauhar, Shamsuddin Khan, Maham Anaga and Jiji Anaga therefore stayed behind to look after the royal baby while the parents sped away to safety. Thus the child was deprived of paternal care and affection at an early age. Even in 1543, when Humayun captured Qandahar the child could not, rejoin his parents because Askari had sent him away to Kabul, where Khanzada Begam, a sister of Babar, brought him up with great affection and care as she noticed a strange likeness in the child's hand and feet akin to her deceased brother's.

About March 1546, Akbar was reunited with his parents and was circumcised. This was the first occasion when Humayun could hold proper celebrations. Festivities continued for days together, and there was an atmosphere of general gaiety and mirth. But, no sooner was this over, the prince passed through a terrible ordeal of death when Kamran reoccupied Kabul and on Humayun's bombardment of it, the former exposed Akbar on the walls of the fort, but providence saved him for another reunion with his father. In 1550-1551, he fell a third time into the hands of his uncle Kamran. But Humayun overpowered him and reoccupied Kabul.

Humayun was a man of culture and refinement and it was, therefore, only natural, that he should desire to give his son the best education possible. A tutor was appointed

Education

for Akbar in his fifth year. After him a number of others were tried but they were uniformly unsuccessful in interesting the prince in reading and writing. Probably, they failed to make him even literate. But we cannot on that ground describe Akbar as uneducated. He had a strong desire for acquiring all sorts of knowledge and continued to pursue this objective all his life, learning a great deal from tutors, regents, courtiers and dependants. His conversations are so interspersed with apt quotations from famous authors that it gives the impression of a widely read person. He had a wonderful aptitude for all applied sciences; In life:

also he acquired great proficiency in wrestling, marksmanship, fencing and taming wild animals. He was thus neither ignorant nor uneducated: only, he was one of those who learnt more through the auditory than through ocular sense. He was very intelligent, and had a strong memory with a penetrating discernment. He was peerless as a judge of men. He was large-hearted, benevolent and sympathetic which enabled him to gauge accurately the feelings of others and to exploit them to his advantage. His teachers included Shias, Sunnis and latitudinarians. Consequently, he had little room for bigotry or fanaticism. Quoting Abul Fazl's apology for Akbar's lack of book-learning "if it had been otherwise how could people have known that his wisdom was based on divine inspiration rather than on human instruction," he relates numerous anecdotes illustrative of Akbar's extraordinary gifts such as recognizing his mother unaided by anybody even though he had been separated from her at a tender age, remembering incidents of his infancy, consoling his nurses *etc.*

The first four years of Akbar's life had been a period of trials and tribulations and though born a prince he did not always receive the honour and regard due to him. In 1546 with Hamida Bahu's arrival in Kabul he was ushered into the royal audience hall with appropriate ceremony and dignity. In 1551, he was appointed to govern Ghazni at the tender age of nine. The servants and followers of his deceased uncle Hindal were also assigned to him. When, Humayun finally decided to invade India, he brought Akbar with him, and on crossing the Indus formally declared him his heir and appointed Munim Khan as his regent. On entering the Punjab, Humayun faced opposition from Sikandar Sur and in May 1555 a fierce battle was fought at Sarhind. Akbar commanded one of the wings assisted by experienced generals like Shamsuddin. It was the Prince's followers that initiated the fight and the Afghans were finally defeated due to Bairam Khan's perseverance, valour and ability. When Humayun left the Punjab for an assault on Delhi, Akbar was left behind as governor of Punjab. At the same time, Munim Khan was sent away to Kabul to act as the regent of Mirza Hakim and Bairam Khan succeeded him as the regent of Akbar.

Akbar and Bairam Khan were still busy fighting against Sur pockets of resistance when they were stunned with the news of the sudden demise of Humayun. Akbar got the news at Kalanaur. A platform was quickly raised and at a simple coronation ceremony he was formally proclaimed Emperor for the first time in February 1556.

This new dignity brought him no prospect of ease or felicity. It was really a crown of thorns to which he had succeeded. Out-

side the Timurids held Kabul, Qandahar and Badakhshan. All these regions once acknowledged the authority of Babar and Humayun. But Akbar could not hope for any aid from here. On the contrary, these might add to his difficulties. The ruler of Persia had his eye on Qandahar and he could launch an attack any moment. Its defence was primarily the concern of Mirza Hakim and his regent Munim Khan. But, if they failed to protect it, the responsibility would devolve on Akbar and his regent. In the political situation then prevalent in India, it was highly improbable that the Persian menace could be successfully met. Kabul was ruled on behalf of Hakim by his mother and Munim Khan. While Akbar could be exposed to any danger that might affect the security of Kabul, he could not count on loyal co-operation from its rulers. Badakhshan was held by Mirza Sulaiman who regarded himself as the head of the Timurid family and aspired to bring Hakim and Akbar under his suzerainty. Thus, from the non-Indian possessions of the Timurids, he could expect nothing better than hostility, opposition and constant worry.

Inside India, his worst enemies were Muhammad Adil Shah Sur and Sikandar Shah Sur. Muhammad Adil Shah was by no means an able ruler. In fact, it was his incompetence which had led to the dismemberment of the Sur empire so soon after the death of Islam Shah that his authority was successfully challenged by two rivals who had occupied the western and the central part of the empire, obliging him to remain contented with the territory lying between Agra and Sambhal on the west and the confines of Bihar in the east. But he could still mobilise Afghan and Hindu support in opposition to the Mughals. Besides, he was ably assisted by a highly gifted minister-general Hemu who won a series of military successes and threatened Delhi and Agra. This general was later rewarded with the title of Vikramaditya and probably cherished a dream of establishing a Hindu empire after the death or deposition of Adil Shah. He was a resident of Mewat and wanted to make it the base of his operations against the Mughal usurpers. In the Punjab, Sikandar Shah Sur still enjoyed considerable power and was busy devising plans for the expulsion of the Mughals. A combination of Hemu and Sikandar could have proved disastrous for the new Mughal sovereign. But luckily for him, they were still consumed by mutual jealousy and animosity. Besides, there were the independent Afghan governors of Gwalior, Malwa, Bihar and Bengal who were seeking to establish independent dynasties of their own. Thus, though the Afghan power was scattered and divided, a large portion of Northern India was still ruled by local Afghan chiefs. If they had adopted a joint plan for the elimination of the Timurids

Problems before
Akbar: Kabul,
Qandahar and
Badakhshan

Afghan rivals

there would have been a serious danger not only to the security of the newly restored Mughal authority but even to the person of its boy king. Such a development appeared highly imminent on account of the victories of Hemu.

The other important political power in northern India consisted of the Rajputs. The sandy desert of Rajasthan and the forest-clad ravines of Central India were the chief centres of their power. Maldeva, the ruler of Marwar was the most powerful among them. His defeat at the hands of Sher Shah had been a great blow to his power and position. This was utilized by the rulers of Mewar, Amber and Jaisalmer to aggrandise their power. But Maldeva had not forgotten how narrowly he had once missed the imperial crown of Northern India. He was one who could make another bid to realize that objective now that the Afghans were weak and disunited and the Mughals passing through a grave crisis. But fortunately for Akbar, Maldeva had created numerous enemies in Rajasthan, so that he was not in a position to wage war against the Mughals just then. This was, however, certain, that Akbar would have to face the Rajputs sooner or later.

Faced with these dangers from within and without Akbar lacked the advantage of internal cohesion. He was just over thirteen years of age and could not, therefore, personally undertake full responsibility for consolidating his possessions. Humayun had appointed Munim Khan and later Bairam Khan as his regent. During Akbar's minority, the regent would exercise *de facto* sovereignty. Hence ambitious and able noblemen aspired for this high dignity. There were four outstanding claimants :—(1) Munim Khan who in respect of age, experience and seniority in rank was the most eligible among the Sunni nobles, and had acted as the regent of Akbar and then of Mirza Hakim.

(2) *Shah Abul Maali* who had enjoyed special personal affection and favour of Humayun, and who was lacking neither in personal bravery nor courage but whose vanity and impudence had crossed all limits of decency.

(3) *Tardi Beg Khan* who was an experienced Sunni noble holding the viceroyalty of Delhi, Agra and Sambhal and

(4) *Bairam Khan* who was a Persian Shia noble, but who had served Humayun with exemplary devotion in Persia and after. He was besides such an excellent administrator and military commander that Humayun had appointed him the regent of Akbar and had conferred on him the honorifics of Khan-i-Khanan, Yar Wafadar etc.

Bairam Khan, being closest to the person of Akbar, was allowed to continue as regent but his appointment could be challenged by other nobles. The rest of the followers of Akbar were divided on grounds of race, religion and country, so that, it was extremely difficult to keep them under proper discipline during this

period of crisis. Had their opposition proved strong or protracted, it would have eminently suited Hemu's plans of conquest.

The circumstances in which Akbar ascended the throne seemed to portend a period of continuous warfare for some time to come. This would necessitate the employment of a huge army which in its turn would entail heavy expenditure. But as Humayun had spent the last ten years of his life in ceaseless fighting against Kamran (1545-1553) and the Surs (1554-1555), he had left little money for his successor. The Mughal authority in India was in such a tottering state of flux that nobody was willing to pay taxes to it lest payment may have to be made again when the Afghans replaced it. Thus the economic prospect was also extremely gloomy.

Consequently, although Akbar had been crowned king at Kalanaur and Tardi Beg had sent him Mirza Abul Qasim the son of Kamran from Delhi, along with the paraphernalia of royalty, and had had the *Khuba* read in his name, the position of the Timurid dynasty in India was extremely precarious. Afghan counter-attacks had started everywhere and it appeared doubtful whether Akbar would be able to retain his foothold. Outside India, he could not count on any safe retreat, while his followers, blinded by self-interest, might start quarrelling among themselves. The foundation of the Timurid dynasty in India had thus to be started again *ab initio*.

The credit for strengthening the roots of the Timurid dynasty in India under such adverse circumstances needs must go to the intelligence and industry of Akbar's regent, Bairam Khan. He was a Qarakulu Turk whose great-great-grandfather Mir Ali Shukra Beg Baharlu had been the ruler of Dayanur, Hamdan and Qurdistan. The grand-father of Bairam Khan had migrated from Persia to Badakhshan and after some time entered the service of Babar along with his son Saif Ali Beg, the father of Bairam Khan.

Bairam Khan was born in Badakhshan and received his education at Balkh. At the age of sixteen, he entered the service of Humayun and took part in the battle of Kanauj or Bilgram. After this battle, Sher Shah offered him the bait of high office to induce him to enter his service but Bairam remained true to his master and after passing through great adventures and vicissitudes, finally rejoined him; Humayun was then planning to go to Qandahar. Since then, Bairam remained constantly attached to him and by his diligence and wisdom rendered him great services in Persia, Qandahar and Kabul. It was largely due to Bairam that Humayun was able to return alive from Persia. Later, when contrary to the terms of his engagement with the

Shah, Humayun retained control over Qandahar, he was able to assuage his feelings by entrusting it to Bairam Khan and representing to the Shah that it had been assigned to a person who was equally a servant of the Shah. Bairam Khan also played a great part in the reconquest of Indian territory by Humayun.

He was a cultured gentleman of wide learning and poetic gifts; a sterling character with an exemplary devotion to his master. He had high administrative and military talents and was second to none in personal valour, courage, or fearlessness. It was these qualities that had won him from Humayun promotion to the rank of peerage, a place in his secret assembly and finally the regency of his heir along with conferment of high-sounding titles.

Despite all this, Bairam Khan was not quite popular among the nobles of Humayun, perhaps, because he was a Shia and they were Sunnis. Secondly, he was a Persian while they were Uzbeks or Chaghtais. But he was not altogether without friends. Many of them had both regard and affection for him. The most notable among them were Munim Khan and Ali Qaili Shaibani, the governor of Sambhal.

On Humayun's death, Bairam Khan easily secured the posts of the Vakil of the Empire and the Regent of the sovereign, which he already was, besides being the only Khan-i-Khanan in the Mughal peerage. Circumstances also conspired in his favour. Munim Khan was away at Kabul and exercised *de facto* authority in the name of Mirza Hakim. He was thus already holding a high office while the prospects in India were by no means so attractive that he should forsake Kabul to challenge the appointment of his own friend. Tardi Beg was at Delhi but in the face of Afghan pressure, he could not leave his post without compromising his honour. Consequently, he too was unable to offer any opposition to the above arrangement. Besides, Tardi Beg had behaved so boorishly in the hour of Humayun's adversity that he commanded far less esteem than Bairam Khan. Shah Abul Maali's worst enemy was his own impudence. Consequently, he too could not successfully compete with Bairam Khan for the office of regency. Thus not only his own personal talents but circumstances also helped Bairam Khan to secure the highest office in the State.

On assuming the reins of office, Bairam Khan tried to conciliate all the leading men. Tardi Beg was given the command of five thousand troops and was appointed Viceroy of the Delhi region. Shah Abul Maali was received at court with great honour and his misbehaviour was overlooked. When Mirza Sulaiman attacked Kabul, Bairam sent a relieving force to assist Munim Khan and when Sulaiman retired discomfited, directed it to escort the royal ladies to India.

With a view to eradicate the power of the Surs, he planned to send an army against Sikandar Sur. But in the meantime, Hemu, the minister-general of Adil Shah advanced from Gwalior to launch an attack on Agra. Hemu commanded a large army equipped with guns and war elephants. Iskandar Khan, the local governor realized the futility of opposing such a powerful force, and therefore, in order to avoid a subsequent surrender he decided to fall back on Delhi. On hearing of the advance of Hemu, Tardi Beg came out of the fort, gave battle and suffered a defeat. But instead of continuing the struggle from inside the fort, he decided to retreat to the Punjab. Consequently, Iskandar also had to accompany him. When Ali Quli Shaibani, the governor of Sambhal heard of these developments, he hastened to join Tardi Beg in a general retreat to the Punjab.

It was at Jalandhar that Akbar heard of the loss of Delhi and the retreat of Tardi Beg. Bairam Khan proposed an immediate march against Hemu but the nobles had become so dispirited that they looked upon it as walking into a death trap and insisted that a prudent retreat to Kabul was the only course open to them. On Bairam Khan's advice, Akbar rejected the cowardly proposal and having made the necessary arrangements for government of Punjab, advanced towards Delhi. He met Tardi Beg at Sarhind. 'Back to Kabul' once more became the insistent cry, and Tardi Beg lent his support to it. Bairam Khan realizing that unless some bold measure was immediately taken to improve the situation, it would inevitably lead to the success of the Afghans and the end of Chaghtai rule in India. He charged Tardi Beg with desertion of duty and according to Badauni, secured permission from the emperor to order his execution. According to Badauni, Bairam Khan secured this permission after furnishing full details of charges against Tardi Beg. But Bayazid regards it as a political murder, born of personal malice. Abul Fazl's account leaves the impression that the execution of Tardi Beg was neither public nor the outcome of a formal indictment. On the contrary, counting on the approval or indifference of the sovereign, he first had Tardi Beg treacherously murdered by his followers and then assigned a cause for it. Ferishta says that he had learnt from reliable sources that, but for the execution of Tardi Beg, the drama of Mughal expulsion would have been enacted again. After the execution all those who regarded themselves as Kaiqubads and Kaikhusraus were thoroughly humbled and realized the necessity of quietly submitting to the authority of Bairam Khan and conforming to his orders. Modern authors are agreed that as Tardi Beg was a rival of Bairam Khan, (belonging to a different sect and leader of the military group), his execution could well be misrepresented as born of Bairam Khan's personal malice and jealousy, but the latter 'at considerable risk to

himself and his reputation' took a decision which was not only essential for the security of Akbar's life and throne but also in conformity with 'military codes of all ages.' Hence they justify rather than condemn the bold move of Bairam Khan.

Having consolidated his position in Delhi and Agra, Hemu decided to send an army to the Punjab. But he was considerably delayed. Had he given the retreating forces under Tardi Beg

Second Battle of Panipat (Nov. 5, 1556) a hot chase, the prospects for Akbar would have considerably worsened. This notwithstanding Hemu was so confident of his

success that he committed a great blunder in sending his artillery along with the vanguard without making due arrangements for prompt reinforcements when necessary. Consequently, when Ali Quli Shaibani at the head of the Mughal vanguard attacked Hemu's vanguard near Panipat, he scored a complete victory and captured Hemu's artillery. When Hemu at the battle of Panipat attacked Akbar at the head of his army it was the artillery he had lost that was utilized by the enemy to hold on to its ranks. Despite this handicap, Hemu was able to rout both the wings of the Mughal army and he proposed to clinch the issue by bearing down the enemy centre by a concentrated use of his war-elephants. To all appearances, the Mughals faced a certain defeat. But it so happened that an arrow pierced the eye of Hemu who fell down unconscious in his *howdah*. The driver sought to take him to a place of safety but he was pursued, overpowered and forced to lead the animal to the Mughal ranks. When Hemu was presented before Akbar and Bairam Khan, he was promptly beheaded. As soon as Hemu was wounded and the army lost his leadership, it became disorganised and ultimately disengaged and fled. Iskandar Khan gave it a hot pursuit, killed thousands of stragglers and entered Delhi in triumph. Two days later, Akbar and Bairam Khan also arrived at the capital. Agra was occupied and all the rosy dreams of Hemu and Adil Shah came to an end. This second battle of Panipat completed the work initiated by Babar thirty years before and imparted solidary and strength to the shaky foundations of the Timurid dynasty in India.

Superficially viewed, the defeat of Hemu was the result of an adverse fate and a mere accident. But it is not really so. Hemu had to face defeat and death in the hour of victory because of his own mistakes. His first indiscretion was not to have launched an offensive against the Mughals immediately after Tardi Beg's withdrawal when his stock was high and the friends of Tardi were clamouring for retreat to Kabul. Secondly, when he did decide to send an army to the Punjab it was not well planned so that most of the artillery was sent along with the vanguard, and no provision was made for effective liaison with the base for prompt reinforcements. This enabled Ali Quli to smash the vanguard

Causes of Hemu's defeat

and capture the artillery which raised the morale of the Mughals and damped the spirits of the Afghans. Thirdly, he was more vain than discreet and instead of directing the movements of his troops from a secure place behind the ranks like Akbar and Bairam Khan he tried to inspire them by his presence in the ranks seated on an elephant and thereby exposing himself to danger. Fourthly, he had not provided for leadership of the army in the event of his death or incapacitation by injury, so, that as soon as he was removed from the field of battle, victory turned into defeat and the Afghans took recourse to flight. Fifthly, the elephant driver of Hemu instead of arranging for his safety within the ranks, tried to carry him away from the field of battle. This enabled Ali Quli Mahram to capture him and after his execution, the very complexion of the battle underwent a change. Lastly, he aspired for kingship in his own person. This frightened Adil Shah to stay back in the east for if Adil Shah had been present at Panipat, there would have been no Afghan stampede even if Hemu had been captured and it might have been impossible for the Mughals to score a victory.

The disaster at Panipat, coming so close after the unexpected success of Hemu practically broke the back of Afghan resistance. They were overtaken by universal despair and disheartenment. The capture of Delhi and Agra by them was like the last flicker of the lamp, finally put out by the second battle of Panipat. A few months later, Sikandar Sur was obliged to make a surrender and having relinquished the whole of the Punjab spent the rest of his life as a petty Mughal *jagirdar*. Adil Shah about the same time was killed in a battle. This made Mughal expansion towards the east easily possible. When Khan-i-Zaman drove Ibrahim Sur out of Jaunpur and defeated the attempt of Sher Shah II the son of Adil Shah no representative of the Sur dynasty was left to challenge or jeopardise the authority of Akbar. This point of culmination was reached by the year 1559.

With the elimination of the Sur rivals, Akbar's position became far more secure than ever before and he now confidently took up the task of expansion and annexation. In this respect, his reign may be divided into three parts—(1) 1556-1560 the period of initial conquests during the regency of Bairam Khan, (2) 1560-1579, the period of subjugation of the north, and (3) the period of wars on the north-western and the Deccan frontiers.

For the conquests of the first period, the credit must go predominantly to Bairam Khan, for all the important decisions of this period were wholly or largely dependent on his will. At the battle of Panipat, Ali Quli Shaibani and Iskandar Khan had specially distinguished themselves. They were, therefore, awarded the titles of Khan-i-Zaman and Khan-i-Alam respectively.

End of the Surs

Annexation and
expansion (1556-
1560)

Mankot

Khan-i-Alam was later sent to Mankot against Sikandar Sur and rendered valuable service in settling the Punjab after the latter had surrendered.

Ali Quli, Khan-i-Zaman was reappointed governor of Sambhal. Having occupied Sambhal, he dashed on further to the east as far as Lucknow and annexed it. The Sambhal, Lucknow, successors of Adil Shah continued for some time a desultory struggle in the east, but in 1559, Khan-i-Zaman captured Benares and Jaunpur and thus carried the limits of the Mughal empire almost to the confines of Bihar.

On learning that the widow of Hemu had carried away with her a huge treasure, Mulla Pir Muhammad Khan, a follower of Bairam Khan was deputed to invade Mewat and to hunt down the fugitive lady. Pir Muhammad occupied Mewat, captured Hemu's father and when the latter refused to embrace Islam even in spite of tortures, ordered his execution. But he could not trace out the treasure or its owner. He was confirmed as the governor of Mewat and initiated a reign of terror to stamp out all sedition and disaffection.

Qiya Khan Gung attacked Rama Sah, the Raja of Gwalior and when the latter on suffering a defeat sought refuge inside the fort, laid siege to it and finally captured it in 1559.

On Pir Muhammad's occupation of Mewat, Haji Khan the local Afghan governor moved away to Ajmer, but when he learnt of Bairam's approach in that direction, he fled to Gujerat. Muhammad Qasim Khan was now appointed governor of the place and the southern frontier of Akbar reached as far as Malwa.

An attempt was made to capture Chunar, Ranthambhor and Malwa, but none of these campaigns proved successful because opposition to Bairam Khan began to mount and the latter could not give his whole-hearted attention to the schemes of conquest.

What was this opposition due to? Bairam Khan had served both Humayun and Akbar with great devotion and loyalty. It was largely by his efforts that Humayun had returned safe from Persia, had been able to retain Qandahar and had secured a restoration in India. After Akbar's accession to the throne, elimination of the Surs and expansion of Mughal territory was entirely due to his courage, valour and farsighted policy. In a sense, he was the real ruler of the realm as the *Vakil* of the empire and the leader of the nobility. But in 1560, a violent gust of opposition suddenly arose and swept away Bairam Khan. This sudden downfall was due to the opposition of a number of groups and individuals.

Among these, dissatisfaction of the Emperor, proved the most decisive. Akbar was soon to get out of his teens and looked upon himself as major and adult. His physical and mental development had reached a maturity when he could shoulder the responsibilities of the state. But Bairam Khan still treated him as a minor and sought to retain all power to himself. Bairam Khan had noticed that the youthful emperor showed little enthusiasm for studies and whiled away his time in hunting, sport and sensual pleasures. He, therefore felt, that his stay at the helm of affairs was essential for the security of the realm. In Akbar, on the other hand, was growing a strong urge for independence and he had begun to chafe at this state of tutelage. This was the psychological background of his dissatisfaction against Bairam Khan. He did not relish the idea that although he was the emperor, his privy purse should be fixed by Bairam Khan and that too in a most niggardly fashion. Some of the acts of Bairam Khan appeared to him certainly repugnant, if not positively derogatory, to his honour, for example, the execution of an imperial *mahaut* even after he had tendered an apology for the mere fault of failing to control an elephant engaged in a single combat when it wildly rushed towards the tent of the Regent. Similarly, the Emperor had noticed that while his personal followers had either received no promotion or promotion at a very slow pace the followers of the Regent contained many *panjhazaris*. According to Nizamuddin Ahmad they numbered 25. Sometimes, Bairam Khan took important decisions without reference to the Emperor who had later to concur as a matter of course. A man like Akbar could not possibly approve the assumption of such extraordinary powers. Appointment of Shaikh Gadai, a Shia as the *Sadr* was an instance in point. Bairam Khan would at times leave unpunished the faults of his personal friends even when the Emperor found their conduct unworthy and impudent. The most glaring example in this regard was that of Khan-i-Zaman. He spirited away from the capital Shaham Beg, a handsome young page who had been the personal favourite of Humayun and despite reminders and even threats refused to surrender him. When he found the imperial pressure too great, he tried to send him underground. Shaham Beg was later murdered but never restored to the Emperor. For this, Bairam Khan took no action and was satisfied with a mere formal expression of regrets.

The husbands and near relations of the nurses of Akbar were collectively known as the Atqakhail or the 'Foster father Cohort'. The most notable among them were Maham Anaga and her son Adham Khan and Jiji Anaga and her husband Shamsuddin Khan. Their principal allies were Shihabuddin, the governor of Delhi, the queen mother Hamida Banu and Mulla Pir Muhammad who had deserted Bairam Khan to join his opponents. The main

Mischievous role
of Atqakhail

cause of its discontent was lack of opportunity for self-aggrandisement. They felt that as persons so close to the Emperor they had a prescriptive right to high offices which Bairam Khan had made the monopoly of his own followers. To advance their selfish interests, they secretly opposed Bairam Khan and sought to poison the ears of the Emperor against him. Calumny and vilification were their favourite weapons. They were conspiring for his overthrow and were secretly organising a group which should be able to defeat Bairam Khan even in open conflict. Intrigues of this class of self-seekers went a long way in bringing about the dismissal of Bairam Khan.

The Regent was no enemy of the Sunnis. Nor did he ever desire to pack all high offices with Shias. But it is not impossible that he might have had a soft corner for the Disregard of Sunni: Shias. Some of his acts lent support to such Sentiments a suspicion. Appointment of Shaikh Gadai as the imperial *Sadr* and undue favour to the Shia Khan-i-Zaman, were perhaps, motivated by this weakness. His apponents whipped up religious sentiments by wilfully misrepresenting his motives. They whispered into the ears of the Emperor that Bairam Khan's game was to win over the *Ulema* through Shaikh Gadai and browbeat the nobles through his own and Khan-i-Zaman's personal influence in a bid to depose the Emperor and replace him by Mirza Abul Qasim, the Shia son of Kamran. The Emperor would then have the prospect of either a violent death or a life-long imprisonment. The Emperor may not have given ready credence to this story but he could neither rule it out as an utter impossibility. This thus proved one of the most effective methods of weaning away the Emperor from the side of the Regent and undermining his influence.

Mughal nobility was often divided by racial rivalry. Bairam's ascendancy improved the prospects of Persians who assumed great airs. This was resented by the Turani group. They looked upon Tardi Beg's execution as a political murder. They too, were thus unfriendly and advocated use of force to throw out Bairam Khan and had their share in hardening the attitude of the Emperor against the Regent.

While this opposition against Bairam Khan was steadily increasing reports came in of military failures against Chunar and Ranthambhor. This not unlikely, also contributed to his downfall for it was represented that the dignity of the empire had suffered because of his failure to take necessary precautions.

The background of his dismissal had thus been prepared, only the final push remained to be given. This was very artfully managed. Akbar proceeded towards Bayana on the excuse of hunting. From there he suddenly turned towards Delhi, sending word to the Regent that he had been obliged to change his programme because of reports of serious illness of his mother. From Delhi, he despatched a letter to Bairam Khan through Abdul Latif whom the latter held in great esteem. The letter was so worded that it indicated the Emperor's loss of faith in his Regent's sincerity and devotion, and his consequent desire to banish him from India for good. It read :

"As I was fully assured of your honesty and fidelity, I left all important affairs of state in your charge and thought only of my own pleasures. I have now determined to take the reins of government into my own hands and it is desirable that you should now make a pilgrimage to Mecca upon which you have been so long intent. A suitable *jagir* . . . will be assigned for your maintenance, the revenues of which shall be transmitted to you by your agents."

Events now moved fast. Pir Muhammad whom Bairam Khan had dismissed and ordered to leave for Mecca was still in Gujarat when he received a letter from Adham Khan advising him to cancel his journey and wait for developments. When Pir Muhammad learnt of the despatch of a letter of dismissal to Bairam Khan, he quickly retraced his steps to the imperial headquarters at Delhi. Shamsuddin left the Punjab and in collaboration with Shihabuddin perfected all arrangements for a military showdown. But when Bairam Khan got the imperial *farman*, he decided to bow to it despite the advice of his followers to the contrary. He had even started on his journey to Gujarat when he found Pir Muhammad the ungrateful upstart whom he had himself first raised to peerage and later banished to Mecca on account of his impudence, coming at his heels, he could no longer put up with this deliberate insult to his honour and turning back moved away to the Punjab.

Akbar promptly sent an army against him which inflicted a defeat on him. Munim Khan came up from Kabul to aid the Emperor. Bairam Khan shuddered at the amount of bloodshed his vanity might cause. He therefore forwarded to the Emperor a letter of submission and sought the favour of an audience to offer his apologies in person. Akbar received him at court with due honour and offered him a seat near his throne. He was willing to re-employ him as governor of a province of the latter's choice but Bairam Khan stuck to his former resolve to go to Mecca. While he was at Patan, an Afghan suddenly attacked and killed him.

A reference to his early career and character has been made elsewhere. It may suffice here to recount some of the incidents

illustrative of his steady devotion and sincere service to his masters. After the battle of Bilgram, the sun of Humayun's glory had all but set. Just then Sher Shah struck by his ability and genius offered him the lure of high office. But Bairam Khan spurned the offer and escaping to Humayun stood by him, through the darkest hour of distress. After a meritorious record of service in Persia and Afghanistan, he took the lion's share in restoring the Mughal power in India. It was he who inflicted the first great defeat on Sikandar Sur at Sarhind and never lost heart or confidence when Hemu secured his victories at Delhi and Agra. Again, it was he who led the Mughal forces to victory at the second battle of Panipat which gave Akbar his chance to rule over India. It was under his leadership that the remnants of Sur power centring round Sikandar, Ibrahim and Adil Shah were liquidated and the boundaries of the Mughal empire extended towards the south and the east. Even during that period of transition, he sought to organise the finances on a sound basis though not with complete success. Sir Wolseley Haig approvingly quotes Badauni's estimate. "In wisdom, generosity, sincerity, goodness of disposition, submissiveness and humility he surpassed all." By his exertions, he paved the ground for the future greatness of Akbar. Even in the hour of disgrace, his conduct was never as bad as it was made to appear by malicious jealousy. Yet Akbar could not have realized his responsibilities without removing him. To that extent, his dismissal was not an unmixed evil. If the transfer of power had been effected by peaceful means and Bairam Khan had not been subjected to insult and vilification, it would have redounded more to the glories of the reign of the noble Emperor.

Further Readings

1. Abul Fazl—*Akbarnama* ((Tr. by Beveridge) Vol. II.
2. Nizamuddin Ahmad—*Tabqat-i-Akbari* (Tr. by De) Vol. II.
3. Badauni—*Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh* (Tr. by Lowe) Vol. II.
4. Smith—*Akbar the Great Moghul* Chapters I to III.
5. Binyon—*Akbar*, Chapters I to VI.
6. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, Chapter IV.
7. Sharma—*Mughal Empire in India*, Vol. I pp. 16-218.
8. Tripathi—*Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Chapter VIII.
(See also the list given at the end of Chapter II).

CHAPTER V

MUGHAL IMPERIALISM

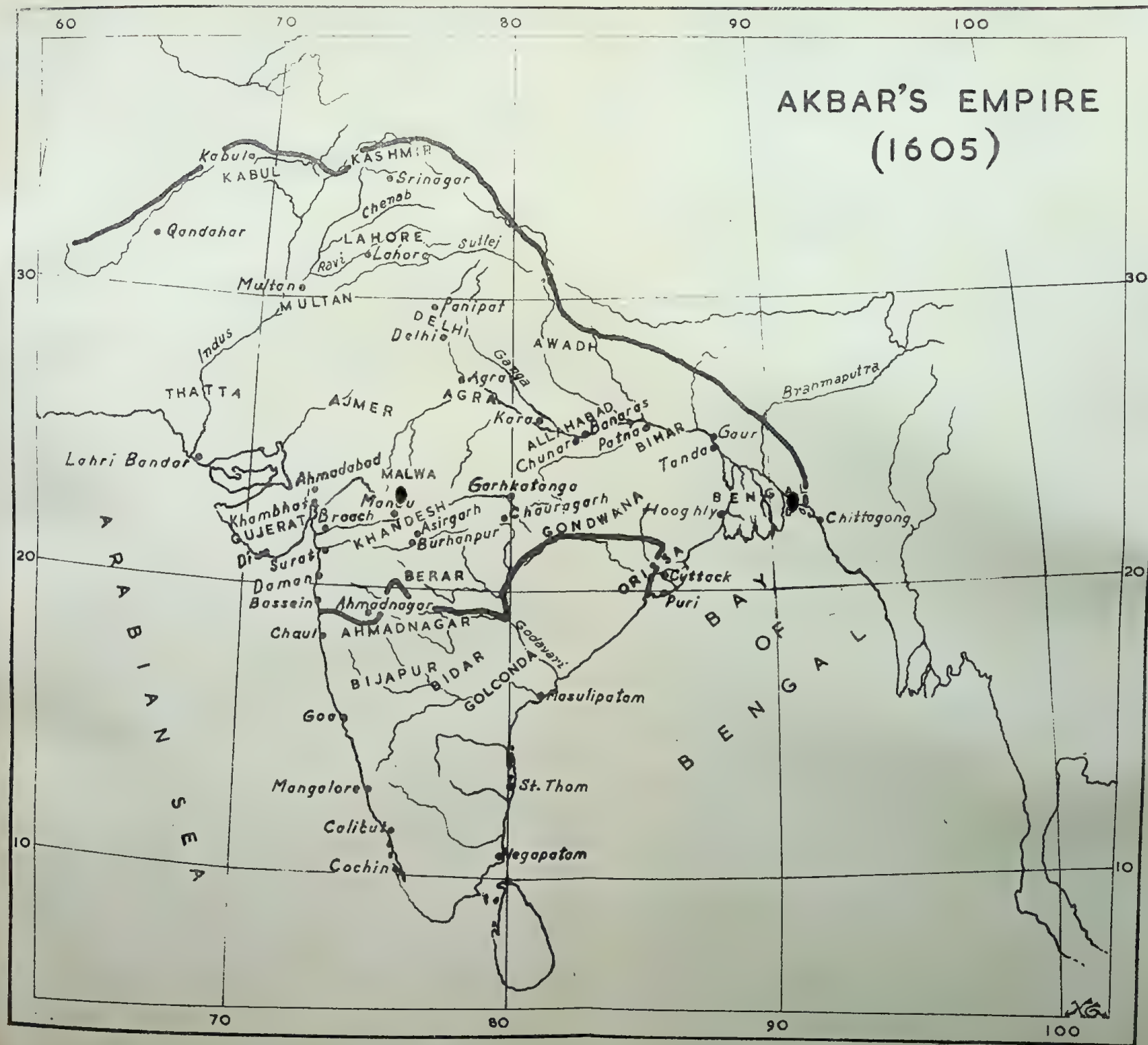
Bairam Khan's exertions and the dissensions among the successors of Islam Shah Sur had made Akbar the master of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Gwalior. But strong remnants of Afghan power still survived in the independent kingdoms of Malwa, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The contemporary rulers there were not anxious to wage war against Akbar just then. But any Afghan leader of ability and ambition could at any time incite them against the Timurids. Rajasthan and Madhya Bharat counted many Rajput chiefs of varying resources whose love of independence and propensity for war was proverbial. Gujerat, Sindh and Kashmir had independent Muslim kingdoms of their own. Towards the south, there were the independent Hindu chiefs of Gondwana and the mighty Vijayanagar kingdom which extended from the *Tungbhadra* and the *Krishna* to Cape Comorin. The rest of the Deccan comprised the Muslim kingdoms of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Berar, Bidar, Golkunda and Bijapur whose rulers were engaged in fighting either against each other or against their Hindu neighbours of Orissa and Vijayanagar.

Akbar was the first to have thought of founding an All-India Empire of the House of Timur. It was certainly inspired by a Imperialist aims of longing for fame and glory. But that was not Akbar and his the sole motive. He felt, and with ample successors justification from past history, that for an all-sided development and progress of the people it was essential to end political disintegration and continuous internecine warfare. His imperialism was free from baser motive. Further, Akbar desired to found an enlightened paternal government and to initiate a policy which may inculcate a feeling of solidarity and equality among peoples of different creeds and classes so that in place of narrow parochialism and class-jealousies a sentiment of national patriotism might grow up. His policy of religious toleration and opening of services to talent, bear eloquent testimony to this. Any accession of strength to the power of the fanatical European traders in India was considered derogatory and prejudicial to the interests of the country. For their expulsion or effective control he desired to extend his authority to the coastal regions. He wished to maintain friendly relations with his north-western neighbours but for proper security of the Indian frontiers, he considered it necessary to occupy the entire Indus basin both to the

34

f
t
n
s
l
t
e
e
d
r
g
r
n
r.
n
ts
d
e
te
n
he
ss
ne
he
ct
e.
er
p
in

AKBAR'S EMPIRE (1605)



Bairam
successors c

Political situ
of India in 1

Bihar and
ious to wa
of ability a
Timurids.
put chiefs
propensity
had indepen
there were
mighty Vija
and the *Kri*
rised the M
Bidar, Golka
ing either ag
Orissa and

Akbar v
Empire of t

Imperialist ah
Akbar and hi
successors

sided develop
end political
His imperiali
sired to found
a policy whic
among people
narrow paroc
patriotism mi
opening of sci
accession of st
in India was
of the coun
he desired to
wished to ma
ghbours but f
dered it nece

east and to the west. Akbar and his successors did not aim at mere extension of territory nor did they base their authority on mere force. At least, upto the time of Shahjahan, they wanted to broad-base their power on the consent of the governed. For that reason, they were ever intent on promoting the prosperity of the land and adorning it with masterpieces of art. They tried to evoke sentiments of gratitude, loyalty and respect rather than fear and awe. Aurangzeb adopted a comparatively narrow outlook and he reaped its fruit in ruin and disintegration. If Mughal imperialism had had room for alliance with independent states, Akbar's war against Rana Pratap and Aurangzeb's struggle against Shivaji would have been unnecessary and the empire might have lasted longer. But the political ideals of the day were unfavourable to the adoption of such a policy. It was not merely the belief of Akbar that if war was not waged against one's neighbours, they would themselves rise in arms against him, but it was almost a universal belief, just as two swords cannot remain in the same scabbard so two independent rulers cannot co-exist in the same country. The rulers of the House of Timur, therefore, tried to establish an All-India empire.

Akbar and his successors did succeed in bringing the whole of India under their sway; but they failed to give it permanence. It is said that nothing in this world can remain static. Probably for that reason there was first a period of expansion and then of gradual disintegration. We shall study these two aspects in two different sections. In the present section we shall arrange facts round the central theme of expansion and, as far as possible, shall examine them in their proper perspective, relating them to their background and evaluating their relative importance. For the sake of convenience, we have divided the story into seven chapters, treating each chapter as a complete delineation of a particular topic or group of related topics. Akbar's first conquest was the kingdom of Malwa while the occupation of Bengal came many years later. We have described the process of the liquidation of these Afghan Sultanates in a single chapter while relations with the Rajputs which largely fall between these two events have been discussed in an earlier chapter because relations with Rajasthan began before the conquest of Malwa, and special relations with the state of Amber were finalised before the subjugation of Malwa had been completed. The Rajputs made a valuable contribution to the growth of the empire. For that reason a description of the process of assertion of Mughal suzerainty over them has preceded the account of destruction of Afghan independence. It was after the conquest of Bengal and Gujerat that Akbar came in close contact with the Portuguese and realized the need for a naval force. Hence the conquest of Gujerat has been taken up immediately after the conquest of Bengal. Next, wars of frontier defence and diplomatic relations with neighbouring states have been studied in

four different chapters. The sequence of chapters has been determined by the order in which these respective problems secured the attention of the Mughal sovereigns. Thus consolidation of the north-western frontier has been taken up first, next comes the question of north-eastern defence and finally the conquest of the Deccan divided into two chapters—one dealing with the annexation of Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda and the other with war against the Marathas bringing out the fact that it was a conflict between imperialist expansionism on the one hand and resurgent patriotism on the other. The task was initiated by Akbar (1556-1605) and continued upto the end of the reign of Aurangzeb (1658-1707) and it is these two monarchs who played a more prominent part in this field than either Jahangir (1605-1627) or Shahjahan (1628-1658).

The empire acquired and organised by Akbar continued to grow for about a hundred years and with minor exceptions here and there retained all round vitality and power. When the rot set in, it took another hundred and fifty years before it gasped its last breath. Thus from the earliest times no empire in India has been either as long-lived or as extensive as the Mughal Empire. The secret of this lies in the personality and liberal public policy of the sovereigns of this dynasty. We shall examine this aspect elsewhere but we have made some reference to it in the second para of this chapter. As long as the outlook of the Mughals remained broad and non-communal they continued to enjoy popular support and were almost deified. But as soon as they became a prey to sectarian bias and discrimination reverence turned into resentment and champions of local independence grew up almost everywhere. Thus the history of this dynasty clearly brings home the lesson that in India only that government can have a long and successful career which, rising above the narrow influences of race and religion, class and caste, may adopt a broad national outlook as the basis of its policy.

Further Readings (For Section 2 as a whole).

1. Abul Fazl—*Akbarnama*, Vols. II & III (Tr. by Beveridge).
2. Nizamuddin Ahmad—*Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Vols. II & III (Tr. by De).
3. Badauni—*Muntakhabat-tawarikh*, Vols. II & III (Tr. by Lawe and Haig).
4. Ferishta—*Tarikh-i-Ferishta* (Tr. by Brigs Vols. II-IV also Urdu translation by Fida Ali).
5. Elliot and Dowson—Vols. V-VII.
6. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*—Eng. Tr. By Rogers and by Munshi.
Hindi Tr. by Munshi Devi Prasad.
7. Sharma—*Mughal Empire in India*, Vols. I and II.
8. *Cambridge History of India*, Vols. III & IV.
9. Tripathi—*Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*.

CHAPTER VI

RAJPUT POLICY OF THE MUGHALS

In the latter half of the 16th century, there were numerous Rajput states of varying size and resources. But during the regime of the Timurids, only Mewar, Marwar, Amber, Principal Rajput states Jaisalmer, Bikaner and the Hadas of Ranthambhor figure more prominently. For generations, Mewar had been regarded as the premier state in Rajputana but after the death of Rana Sanga, Marwar took precedence over it and a number of its former vassals either became independent or meditated independence. The Hadas of Ranthambhor also fall within this group. It was the Sisodiyas of Mewar who put up the stoutest resistance against the Timurids and never submitted to any dishonourable terms. The Kachhwahas of Amber on the other hand, submitted without fighting and cemented their alliance by a matrimonial treaty which won for them the highest esteem in the Mughal court. Maldeva, the ruler of Marwar had once dreamt of occupying Delhi itself. But his successors, with the solitary exception of Rao Chandrasen, who undaunted, by the might of Akbar chose the path of war, followed in the footsteps of the house of Amber and secured the highest *mansabs* at the Mughal court. Later when the policy of Aurangzeb caused a general discontent, it was Mewar and Marwar which took the lead in the fight for freedom.

The Rajputs had once held sway over the whole of India. But in the 13th century, the Turks occupied the Indo-Gangetic basin and the Rajputs of that region had to seek shelter elsewhere or submit to the Failure of the policy of the Sultans invader. In the 13th and the first half of the 14th century, the Turks did their best to extend their authority over the whole of India but they seldom succeeded in maintaining their suzerainty over Rajputana, Central India, Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand. Only Alauddin had succeeded in imposing his authority over most of Rajasthan and Central India but it did not last long and from the time of the Tughluqs, the states of Rajasthan, Central India, Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand generally remained independent. Sher Shah subjugated these regions once again; but his task was undone even sooner than that of Alauddin and Rajasthan regained its independence soon after his death. Thus the Sultans had aimed at exterminating or suppressing the Rajputs by sheer military force. Forced by circumstances, they had at times suffered them to exist as tributary vassals. But none except Alauddin showed them any respect. It was he who had

treated Maldeva and Ramachandra Yadava with generosity and had married himself and the heir-apparent with Rajput princesses. But his general policy was too stern to evoke a sense of loyalty or reverence among the Hindus in general or the Rajputs in particular. The Lodis, in their struggle against the Turks and the Sharqis, had secured the cooperation of a number of Rajput chiefs and princes and one of them Raja Vikramaditya of Gwalior died fighting for Ibrahim at the battle of Panipat. The Surs also, had adopted a conciliatory policy towards the ruler of Gwalior and the two Afghan dynasties benefited considerably by it. But because they never treated them on terms of equality they failed to secure their whole-hearted support. The Rajputs continued to cherish dreams of independence by expelling the Turks. Thus, the Rajput policy of the Sultans of Delhi was a failure and led to their decay and downfall.

It was possible for Babar to secure the cooperation of the Rajputs. He had come to an understanding with Rana Sanga on the question of dividing the Afghan Empire between them. But with the passage of time they began to suspect each others motives leading to a war between them. Madini Rai, a subordinate ally of Rana Sanga held the fort of Chanderi. When Babar defeated Medini Rai and occupied Chanderi, he married Humayun to a Rajput princess but nothing more is known about her. One can conclude that this marriage had little or no political significance. In the reign of Humayun, another opportunity offered itself for promoting friendly relations with Mewar but the Emperor could not take advantage of it. On his deposition, Maldeva extended his hand of friendship to Humayun but he failed to take advantage of it.

Finally, Humayun repaired to the court of the Shah of Persia due to Afghan pressure and perfidy of self-seeking kinsmen. It is said that Shah Tahmasp told Humayun that when the Afghans and the Rajputs were rivals for power, Babar had secured sovereignty by displacing the former; wisdom and farsight demanded that all efforts should be made to rope in the support of the latter in the annihilation of Afghan power.

The death of Humayun came so soon after his restoration that he had no chance of initiating any far reaching or broad change in state policy. But his son and successor, while determining the aims and objects of his government, made it a principal plank in his policy to secure the cooperation of the Rajputs. The history of the last three hundred and fifty years bore ample testimony to the fact that in the land of the Hindus it was impossible to establish a stable or peaceful government without the sympathies of their political leaders, the Rajputs. On the contrary, whenever an attempt, however partial, was made to conciliate them, the results and been

encouraging. Thus the past recommended a policy of fraternisation with them. The contemporary Rajput states had a traditional enmity against their neighbours. If this could be exploited as a weapon of Mughal imperial policy, expansion could be easy. Individually, Rajputs were redoubtable fighters. To the vigour of body they combined skill in the use of arms and, in the hour of crisis, feared neither death nor deserted to the enemy for lure of gold or office. Their loyalty to the salt was proverbial. Their mental qualities were superior even to their military excellences. They regarded no sin more heinous than treachery to their master. They considered it inconsistent with their dignity and family pride to do anything dishonourable. Gold and silver could not purchase their sense of honour and chivalry. They preferred death to dishonour. They had that moral enlightenment which made them abhor injury to the honour of women or the life and property of non-combatants. These traits of the Rajput warrior had been confirmed by an unbroken tradition of centuries and had come to form and permeate their very flesh and blood. The Mughal rulers were a foreign people and had relied on foreign troops for their wars in India. But it was not always possible to secure an unfailing supply of foreign recruits; and these, even when available, had no love or sympathy for the common man, so that their treatment of the people was often ruthless and cruel. Then, they had become unduly vain and presumptuous as the props of the state. Therefore, they did not always show due respect to the sovereign and were an easy prey to thoughts of rebellion. Assured of unstinted support by the Rajputs, this manifold problem of foreign levies could be satisfactorily tackled. Thus in his self-interest, it was necessary to secure an alliance with the Rajputs as servants and supporters of the Mughal monarchy even on their terms. It was Akbar who first understood the true appreciation of this problem, and realized the necessity of adopting a fresh policy towards them. Cooperation with the Rajputs could help him make the foreign nature of his monarchy into a national one, which in turn could win him popular support and strengthen the roots of his dynasty. It is also said that as Akbar was born under the roof of a Rajput, he had a sense of gratitude and affection for that community as a whole. His natural breadth of vision, liberal tendencies of his family and the wholesome influence of his tutors, specially Abdul Latif, have been mentioned as the predisposing causes of Akbar's generous treatment to the Rajputs. Hence the power and position assigned to them in Akbar's imperialism was in many respects distinctive and unique.

Akbar's aim was conciliation. But he did not want to give an impression of pusillanimity or weakness. He aimed at demonstrating his overwhelming military superiority as the bed-rock of his policy of lasting friendship. If his success against non-Rajput states gave the Rajputs this impression, so much the better.

Elements of his
policy

Otherwise, he was prepared to seize by force their so-called impregnable forts and give an unimpeachable proof of his military prowess and resources. But to those who were willing to submit even after defeat he gave an assurance to respect their family honour. A Raja was, therefore, allowed to retain the whole of his former territory, was permitted to enjoy full autonomy in internal administration and guaranteed protection against outside aggression. If perchance Akbar seized and retained some forts in his possession for reasons of imperial security, the Raja was compensated by grant of *jagir* elsewhere. He invited the Rajputs to share the burdens of the imperial government and the adventures of wars of conquest, and to those who responded he offered the highest posts and ranks proportionate to their status and ability. That is why he offered them the highest *mansab* in the state and appointed them as governors of provinces. As a means of strengthening and perpetuating friendly relations, he induced them to accept jobs in the civil and military organisation of the state. But if a ruler wished to be excused from this honour and offered the services of his followers and kinsmen, the Emperor willingly made an exception. To bridge the gulf between the suzerain and the vassal Akbar desired to establish matrimonial alliances with them. Such alliances would Indianize the Timurids and give the Rajputs the honour and distinction of becoming close relations of the imperial house. The first union of this type happened in 1562 when Bhamal, the ruler of Amber, offered his daughter in marriage to the Emperor. This lady was the mother of Prince Salim who succeeded Akbar as Jahangir. The example of Amber was emulated by the ruling houses of Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Marwar and other states so that matrimonial alliances became the usual and integral part of Mughal Rajput policy.

The motives inspiring the scheme of matrimonial alliances have not been properly appreciated by all. It is universally conceded

that as a result of this policy, Rajasthan escaped terrible wars and the Timurid dynasty gained a rapid extension in prestige and power; Rajput talent was utilized in the service of the people over a wide territory and northern India was assured political unification, still, it did not receive universal approbation. Dr. Beni Prasad says, "It symbolized the dawn of a new era in Indian politics; it gave the country a line of remarkable sovereigns; it secured to four generations of Mughal emperors the services of some of the greatest captains and diplomats that mediaeval India produced." Dr. Ishwari Prasad credits it with bringing about 'an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill'. But those who have viewed these marriages from a narrow caste outlook have pronounced them as derogatory to the honour of the Rajputs. To communal-minded people, Akbar appears as a vile diplomat who artfully designed the plan of these marriages to deprive the Rajputs of their racial pride and to turn the champions of freedom into slaves of his policy. These

latter views have, however, more of misguided passion than sober historical sense. From the hoary past, Indian rulers had constantly been making matrimonial alliances without any bar of class or caste. Even in the 16th century, the Chandelas had married their daughter Durgawati to a Gond Prince. Raja Ramachandra Deva had married his daughter to Alauddin and there is no mention of the Yadavas suffering any social ostracism on that account. Saka, Kushan and Huna rulers had intermarried in Indian ruling families, while Brahmin ruling dynasties of medieval India had freely intermarried in non-Brahmin ruling families. Thus, such marriages were neither unknown nor considered unworthy. In Indian society, offering a daughter in marriage was regarded as a sign of acceptance of the superiority of the other party. But this did not apply to marriages in royal families. Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya defeated Vakatakas and then married his daughter to the defeated prince. Similarly, Prasenjit offered his daughter in marriage to Ajatshatru after scoring a victory over him in order to establish friendly relations between the two ruling houses of Magadha and Kosala. Only in the medieval times rules of marriage and inter-dining became more rigorous and strict. That is why what had formerly been regarded as a legitimate means of strengthening political ties appeared dishonourable to the unenlightened few. It is also worth noting that these marriages neither caused any internal disturbances in any Rajput states nor did they affect their mutual marriage relations. Tradition credits Rana Pratap with having castigated such alliances as unworthy, but even his successors did not find their honour compromised by marrying into the families of those who had the alleged stigma of matrimonial relationship with the Mughals. If the Rajput ladies had been treated as inferior to other ladies in the royal harem, then there might be some basis for suggestion of compromised honour; but this was not so. If Akbar had offered some Mughal princesses in marriage to Rajputs, he might have appeared less vile to the communal patriot. But a practice was now started, of keeping the Mughal princesses generally unmarried, possibly to lessen dangers of wars of succession. Hence marriage of Mughal princesses with Rajput chiefs could not be promoted. It must be remembered that although Akbar regarded matrimonial alliance as an aid to abiding friendship, he did not make them obligatory on all, as is clear by the terms of the treaty with Surjan Hada.

Despite all this Akbar did not want to do anything which could later compromise the security of his empire nor did he hesitate to do anything that might help secure his objective better. Hence he enrolled the ablest Rajputs in higher state services and posted them away from Rajasthan. Thus Rajasthan was virtually denuded of leaders capable of organising effective opposition. He also occupied some strategic forts and garrisoned them with imperial

Precautionary
Measures

troops. He was not averse to take advantage of disputed successions, as in the case of Mewar and Marwar. Sometimes, vassals of Rajput rulers were treated as independent chiefs and enrolled into Mughal service on terms equal to rulers of independent states. The most notable example of this is, the Hadas of Ranthambhor. It is thus clear that the chief aim of Akbar was to strengthen his dynasty and to establish political unity in the country by enlarging the imperial ambit to the farthest possible limit. Those who were willing to cooperate were shown extraordinary favours and unprecedented generosity. They were assured of complete social, religious and political equality. But those, who like the Ranas of Mewar opposed his policy were forcibly uprooted though he was willing, despite their past conduct, to grant them the usual privileges in case they decided to submit to his authority. His policy of conciliation was based on realism and not on temperamental liberalism alone.

Maharana Uday Singh once again raised Mewar to preeminence in Rajasthan. His authority extended to Ranthambhor

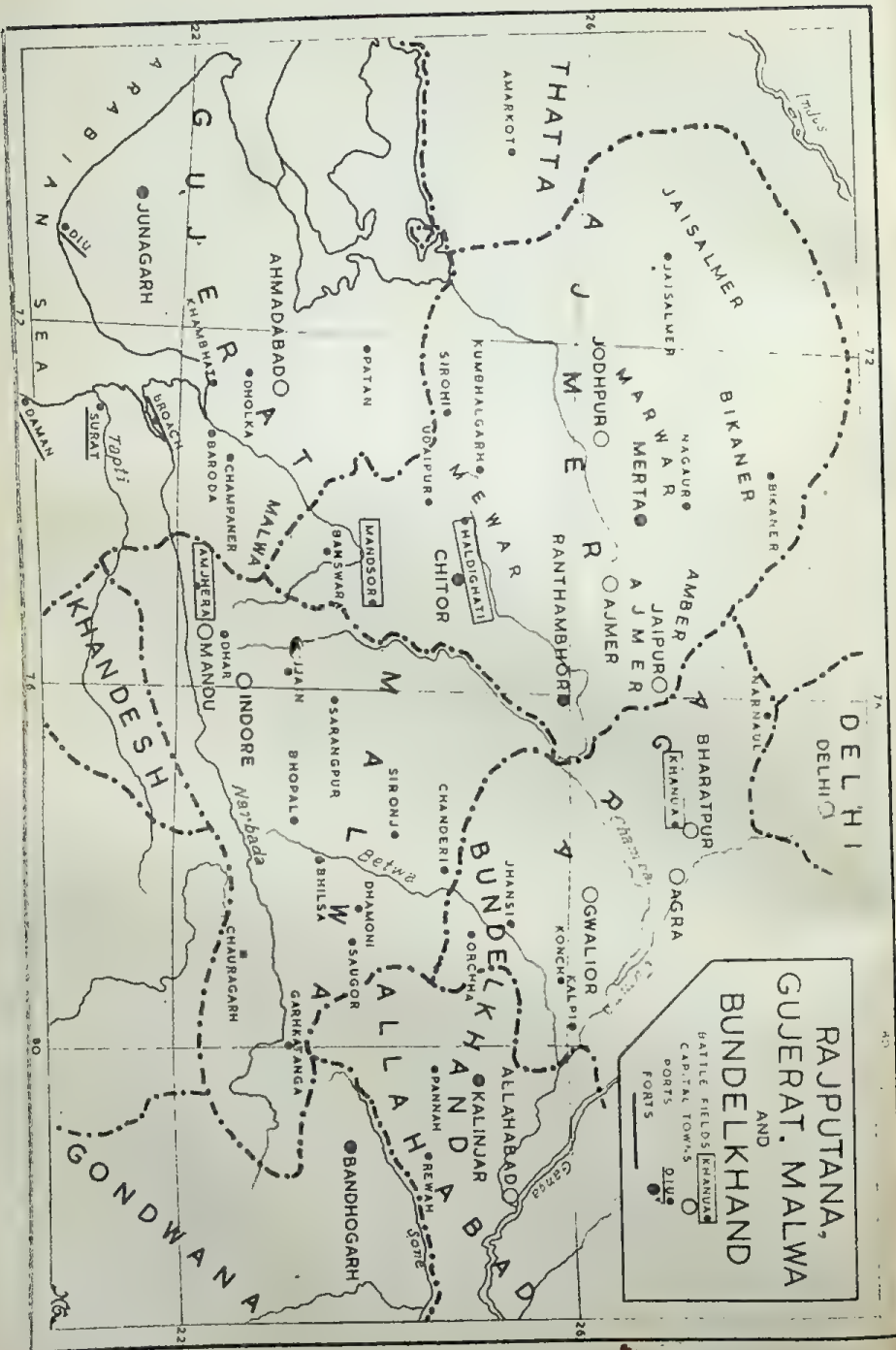
Relations with
Mewar

and Merta in the north and his sphere of influence was steadily increasing. Akbar had already made himself the master of Ajmer, Nagor and Mewat. Gwalior, the gateway of Central India was also under his command while its ruler Raja Ram Sah had sought an asylum under Uday Singh of Mewar. Ranthambhor commanded the entrance to Rajasthan, and an attempt in 1559 to capture Ranthambhor failed because Surjan Hada, the local vassal chief of Mewar beat back the invaders. Thus war between the Rana and the Mughal Emperor had been initiated even before 1560. In 1562, Mirza Sharfuddin, the governor of Mewat attacked Merta, and Jayamal failing to hold out indefinitely surrendered the fort and repaired with his followers and dependents to Chitor. But these developments did not frighten the Rana and he did not hesitate to grant an asylum to Baz Bahadur in 1562 or to the rebellious Mirzas in 1564 and 1567.

When friction had once started, a showdown between the House of Mewar and the Mughal Emperor was bound to follow sooner or later because neither the Rana was

Causes of invasion pusillanimous enough to acknowledge Akbar's suzerainty without fighting nor was Akbar's imperialism liberal enough to allow the independent existence of any powerful prince. It was a case of natural conflict between the irreconcilable principles of local independence and imperial unification. But other causes cropped up to hasten the conflict. The Rana of Mewar had defied the authority of the Emperor by granting an asylum to his political opponents. Imperial dignity also demanded that the defeat at Ranthambhor by Hada, the Rana's vassal should be avenged by a victory over the Rana himself. Shakti Singh, a son of the Maharana had joined the retinue of Akbar at Dholpur and, the Emperor half jestingly, had remarked





RAJPUTANA,
GUERAT, MALWA
AND
BUNDELKHAND

BATTLE FIELDS [KHANUA]
CAPITAL TOWNS [DIU]
PORTS [DIU]
FORTS [DIU]

to him that he contemplated an attack on Chitor because the Rana had not offered his submission as the other Rajput chiefs had done. On hearing this, the prince fled the Mughal camp by night and galloped away at full speed to apprise his father of the imperial intentions. The flight of Shakti Singh obliged the Emperor to make good his words. But as already stated, these incidents were of secondary importance and mere excuses for the inevitable struggle. Akbar was conscious of the strength of Mewar specially in impregnable forts like Ranthambhor and Chitor. For the conquest of Rajasthan he thought it would be much better to knock down its strongest chief and thus overawe others into a tame submission rather than to begin by capturing the weaker states and going through the tedious process of defeating them one by one. That is why he undertook the subjugation of Mewar only after consolidating his position by suppressing the Uzbegs and beating back Mirza Hakim.

The siege of Chitor began in October 1567. Uday Singh held a council of war to settle his plan of action. It was decided

that while on the one hand Chitor should be strongly garrisoned and a defensive struggle carried on from inside the fort, a second force should operate from outside to harass the Mughals and disrupt their

line of supplies. This latter was a more arduous task, and therefore, undertaken by the Rana himself, while the defence of Chitor was entrusted to Jayamal. The presence of the Emperor at the scene of operations lent great energy to the efforts of the besiegers and the stranglehold on the Rajputs was allowed no slackening. Finally, when Akbar was able to effect a breach in the walls by exploding a mine and initiating a heavy bombardment by mounting cannons on *sabats*, the Rajputs began to despair of success. Also, Akbar accurately spotted Jayamal and seriously wounded him by gunshot. Patta was then chosen to lead the *Jauhar* party, and the Emperor occupied the fort in February 1568.

Tod makes no reference to any meeting of a council of war and the Rajput *Khyats* describe Uday Singh as weak and cowardly. Tod condemns him as unworthy of the house of Sisoda. But this is unfair to Uday Singh's true merits. His defeat has been painted in more lurid colours probably to heighten the glory of his son Maharana Pratap. If Uday Singh was really so chicken-hearted as he is made out he could have easily toed the line of the other Rajput princes and accepted the vassalage of the Emperor. But he never forsook independence despite his defeat. It thus appears that Tod and the Rajput chroniclers in their enthusiasm to applaud the feats of his son had conspired to smear his career without any justification.

In order to exert further pressure on the Rana, the Emperor invested his other chief fort viz. Ranthambhor. It was held by Surjan Hada who once more put up a gallant resistance to the imperialists. But the latter were flushed with the victory of Chitor and the imperial resources had been greatly augmented since the last invasion. Hence the besieging army of 1569 was far stronger than that of 1559. When Surjan realized the futility of further resistance, he opened negotiations for surrender through the mediation of Bhagwan Das and Man Singh, the Kachhwaha princes of Amber. Akbar treated the Hadas generously and reconciled them to his suzerainty by granting liberal terms. He exempted Hada from service beyond Attock and they were not asked to enter into a matrimonial alliance or to serve under any other Hindu *mansabdar* or to perform the *Sidda* at the court. They were also permitted to wear their arms while appearing at the hall of audience. Surjan was also enrolled as a *mansabdar* and sent to govern Gondwana from where he was later transferred to Benares and Chunar.

The loss of Ranthambhor further weakened the Maharana but it did not bring Uday Singh to his knees. He built a new capital at Udaypur and continued to defy the authority of Akbar as long as he lived.

In 1569 the Emperor sent an army under Manjnu Khan for the conquest of Kalinjar. Ramachandra, the local ruler, resisted the move but when the report of the defeat of the Ranas of Mewar reached him, he was so unnerved that he despaired of success and submitted to the Emperor, who occupied Kalinjar but compensated this loss to the Raja by a *jagir* near Prayag.

In 1570, when the Emperor encamped at Nagor a number of Rajput chiefs came to wait upon him and offered their submission. Among these, three deserve special mention — (1) Rao Chandra Sen, the son and successor of Rao Maldeva of Marwar (2) Rao Kalyan Mal, the ruler of Bikaner accompanied by his son Ray Singh and (3) Rawal Hararay, the ruler of Jaisalmer. Thus the defeat of the Rana of Mewar had a profound effect on the rulers of Rajasthan, many of whom accepted vassalage of their own accord.

Among the Ranas of Mewar, Maharana Pratap, the son and successor of Uday Singh, acquired a fame unique amongst Maharana Pratap's the rulers of Rajasthan. The story of his fight for freedom glorious career reverberates even to this day not only in Rajasthan but in every nook and corner of this great land and many a medieval and modern thinker, poet and author has honoured him by singing his praises. The secret of the Rana's fame lies in his sterling character. He

gladly sacrificed all the pleasures of life to the altar of liberty and family honour. He set before himself the ideal of dying for a cause irrespective of the chances of success or failure in war. His career presents a glorious example of courage, valour, unsullied honour and patriotic zeal in the service of the motherland. Before he died, he succeeded in realizing his objective to a large measure. But the admirers of the Rana have not always been fair to the motives and intentions of Akbar.

The ideal before the Rana was to secure the freedom of Mewar and to reoccupy Chitor. Hence, soon after securing the reins of office, he started strengthening his military resources and defences of the principal forts. The forts of Kumbhalner and Goganda were repaired. But the Rana had no plans for the unification of Rajasthan under an improved scheme of government or for establishing a united front of the Rajputs against the Emperor. Akbar desired that the Rana should accept his suzerainty. With that end in view, he sent political missions to him and offered to grant him the most favoured terms. But the Rana refused to buy peace at the cost of liberty. He is reported on to have even insulted Man Singh, the agent of Akbar.

Consequently, in 1576 Asaf Khan and Man Singh were ordered at the head of an army to invade Mewar. The first encounter took place between the Rana and Asaf Khan and the day appeared to be going in favour of the former; but as the army under Man Singh was sighted the Rajputs thought that the Emperor had himself arrived. This somewhat unnerved them and the two wings of the imperial army so outnumbered them that they finally lost the day.

The Rana was unwilling to leave his post but on the insistence of his lieutenants was persuaded to fly to safety in the interest of the motherland. The Rana suffered very heavy losses. He lost five hundred from among near of kins. Ram Sah Tomar of Gwalior died at the head of his 350 followers. Among common soldiers, the casualties were so heavy that there was hardly a family which did not mourn the loss of its dear ones. Man Singh gave the Rana a hot chase and came so close to him that had he desired he could have captured him. But he was a chivalrous Rajput who admired the courage of the Rana, and let the Rana escape, unmindful of its consequences on his own career. When Akbar learnt of this, he was mightily offended and forbade Man Singh from appearing at the court.

For some time after this reverse, the Rana had to suffer great vicissitudes of life. But when Akbar was obliged to relax his pressure on him on account of preoccupations on the north-western frontier, the Rana reconquered a large part of his territory, but was unable to secure Chitor. Akbar had appointed Shakti Singh a younger brother of the Rana to rule over the conquered territory. But the Rana was gradually able to reassert power and influence and died in comparative peace.

Amar Singh, the son and successor of the Maharana emulated the example of his father. Akbar greatly desired to extend his suzerainty over Mewar but the revolt of Salim and the wars in the Deccan left this unrealized. When Salim ascended the throne as Jahangir he decided to accomplish what his father had left half done. He therefore put all his energy into the conquest of Mewar after the revolt of Khusrau had been suppressed.

Amar Singh had introduced a number of reforms to ameliorate the condition of his war-scarred subjects and the Rajputs, and put up a stiff opposition to all attempts by

(f) Submission of Akbar to impose his sovereignty over them.
Mewar (1614)

But between 1606 and 1614 successive Mughal generals Asaf Khan (1606-1608), Mahabat Khan (1608-1609), Abdullah Khan (1609-1611), Raja Basu (1611), Aziz Koka (1611-1614) and Prince Khurram (1614) took all possible measures to bring the Rana to his knees. Village and town were sacked and plundered. Standing crops, orchards and forests were subjected to a similar fate. Temples were razed to the ground and the people subjected to great distress. At last, under Khurram the last refuge of the Rana was heavily surrounded and the stranglehold rapidly closed in, while all supplies were cut off. Oppressed by popular suffering and insistence of the nobility headed by the Crown-Prince Karna Singh, the Rana was obliged to sue for peace. Khurram welcomed the move and Jahangir who had moved to Ajmer to step up the tempo of war, treated the Rana with great generosity. All his territory was restored to him but he was forbidden to fortify Chitor. The Emperor also exempted the Rana from accepting a *mansab* or appearing at the court. Nor was a matrimonial alliance insisted on Amar Singh nominally lost his independence but secured for his people freedom from oppression and opportunities for peaceful-existence. Even so, the son of Rana Pratap found the new arrangement galling to his pride and he abdicated the throne shortly afterwards.

After 1614, neither party broke the terms of the treaty and the relations on the whole were good. But when Shahjahan rebelled against Jahangir, Rana Jagat Singh

(g) Subsequent relations

gave him shelter within his kingdom and during the closing years of Shahjahan's reign started reconstructing the fort of Chitor which after his death in 1652 was continued by Rana Raj Singh. In 1654, Shahjahan sent a force to occupy a part of Rana's territory near Ajmer and demolish the buildings, but the Rana offered no resistance. In 1658, Aurangzeb restored this territory to the Rana, in order to secure his support. But in 1679, when Aurangzeb made a demand for *jizya* and refused to recognize the authority Ajit Singh over Marwar and his mother appealed to the Rana for help Raj Singh joined in a war against the Emperor.* But peace was again res-

1. See Chap. XIV for details of the revolt.

tored, only Jay Singh the successor of Raj Singh had to cede certain districts in lieu of *jizya*. Later, when Aurangzeb was involved in a war in the Deccan, he bought the assistance of the Rana by not only restoring the above districts back to him but by ceding the state Sirohi as well.

Marwar gradually acquired more and more importance after the defeat and death of Rana Sanga, till under Rao Maldeva (1532-1563), it acquired pre-eminence in Rajasthan. But Mewar effected a recovery only

Relations with
Marwar

after the accession of Rana Uday Singh so that certain dependencies of Marwar passed under the control of Mewar and others acquired independence. After the defeat of Rana Uday Singh, Rao Chandra Sen came to wait on the Emperor in 1570. Pt. Vishweshwar Nath Reu is of opinion that he had gone to the Emperor only to acquire a first-hand knowledge of conditions in the Mughal camp. But Fazl asserts that Rao Chandra Sen had accepted the suzerainty of the Emperor although he rose in rebellion later.¹ Akbar set up Mota Raja Uday Singh as a rival against him, in the war on behalf of his protege, he deposed Chandra Sen and installed Uday Singh on the throne and also entered into a matrimonial alliance with him. Thus the ruler of Marwar became a subordinate ally and vassal of the Mughal Emperor. From then onwards right upto Aurangzeb's reign the rulers of Marwar remained loyal vassals of the Mughal dynasty till the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh in 1678, when the Emperor sought to occupy Marwar, but Durga Das started a war of resistance on behalf of Ajit Singh. After the death of Aurangzeb, Bahadur Shah recognised Ajit as the ruler of Marwar and peace returned to that state after a lapse of thirty years.

Just as Akbar had followed up the defeat of Rana Uday Singh by the occupation of Kalinjar and Ranthambhor, he exploited his success against Rana Pratap at Haldighati to secure subjugation of Banswara, Dungarpur, Bundi and Orchha between 1576-1578.

Submission of
minor states

As stated earlier, many Rajput Rajas accepted Mughal suzerainty of their own free will or under diplomatic pressure.

The Kachhwahas
of Amber

Among these states, the most notable was the state of Amber. During the early years of Akbar's reign, Amber was distracted by a disputed succession. The opponents of Bharmal sought shelter with Mirza Sharfuddin, the governor of Mewar and egged him on to depose Bharmal who found his position extremely precarious. In January 1562 when the Emperor was proceeding to Ajmer, Bharmal, accompanied by his son Bhagwan Das came to wait upon him and prayed for protection against the high-handedness of Mirza Sharfuddin. Akbar promised him protection on condition

¹ For details of the revolt see chapter XIV.

that he enrolled himself as a *mansabdar* of the empire and as a proof of his sincere devotion offered his daughter in marriage to the Emperor. Bharmal agreed to these terms and the Emperor was able to launch on his policy of matrimonial alliances with the Rajputs. This marriage proved very auspicious to the Emperor and the empire, for out of this union was born Prince Salim, and the Emperor and his successors were able to secure the services of many distinguished generals, administrators and diplomats. Among the rulers of Amber, Bharmal, Bhagwan Das and Man Singh secured the highest *mansabs* of their times while Raja Jay Singh and Sawai Raja Jay Singh acquired great fame among its later rulers.

In imitation of Amber, Kalyanmal, the ruler of Bikaner, Rawal Hararay, the ruler of Jaisalmer, Uday Singh, the ruler of Marwar and Rawal Askaran of Dungarpur also entered into matrimonial alliances and accepted the suzerainty of the Emperor who conferred on them high *mansabs* and a place of honour at the Mughal court.

As a result of Akbar's policy all the Rajput states of Northern India except for a part of Mewar passed under his suzerainty.

He kept them satisfied by his generous and liberal treatment and some Hindu festivals were celebrated at the Mughal court. The Emperor adopted many Hindu practices and allowed the Rajputs and their co-religionists full freedom to follow their faith and erect temples to their Gods. They were besides given high posts, extensive *jagirs* and a places of honour at the court which made them so grateful that they became his firm and loyal supporters for life. They added to the military strength of the empire and contributed to its expansion by successful wars against Afghans, Rajputs, Kashmiris, Gujeratis and others. They lived their lives in the service of the Emperor and the empire and endeared themselves to his heart by their high moral qualities. They also distinguished themselves as administrators and patrons of art and letters.

This glorious result was possible only on account of the far-sighted and liberal policy of Akbar. As long as his successors followed in his footsteps they continued to enjoy unstinted support of the Rajputs. But from the time of Jahangir, marriages in Rajput families were few and far between. Under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb such alliances were still less. Shahjahan as a matter of fact initiated a policy of religious persecution and iconoclasm. This made the Rajputs sullen and discontented. Association with other nobles of the Mughal court made them a prey to prevailing vices and they lost some of their former merits. They took to luxury and at times had recourse to chicanery and deceit and could no longer be depended upon as implicitly as before. Aurangzeb distrusted both Jay Singh and Jaswant Singh but did not dare to dismiss them, and therefore, according to the popular belief, took recourse to poisoning, to get rid of them. Under him, religious persecution exceeded all limits. This had a violent reaction in

Rajasthan and gave birth to a rising which seriously undermined the strength of the empire. Mughal court life had such a demoralising effect on them that during the regime of Lord Wellesley they accepted subsidiary alliances without a word of protest. In that sense, submission to the Timurids led to a general deterioration of the Rajputs as a race.

Further Readings

1. Ojha—*Rajputana Ka Itihas* (Hindi).
2. „ —*Udaypur Rajya ka Itihas* (Hindi) pp. 346-509.
3. Vishweshwar Nath Reu—*Marwar ka Itihas*, Vol. I pp. 116-296.
4. Gorelal—*Bundelkhand ka Itihas*.
5. Smith—*Akbar the Great Moghul* Chap. IV and V.
6. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*, Chap. CX.
7. Tod (Ed. by Crooke)—*Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*.
(See also the list given at the end of Chap. V).

CHAPTER VII

EXTERMINATION OF AFGHAN POWER

We have noticed in foregoing chapter how with the defeats of Sikandar Shah Sur, Ibrahim Khan Sur, Muhammad Adil Shah Sur and his son Sher Shah II, Sur political power came to an end. All these events took place during the regency of Bairam Khan.

Afghan Successors of the Surs The end of the Surs led to two developments. In Punjab, Mewat and a major part of modern Uttar Pradesh Akbar's military captains strongly entrenched their positions, while on the other hand in many other places local Afghan governors became founders of independent kingdoms or chieftaincies. Afghan chiefs holding Ranthambhor, Gwalior, Ajmer and Nagor could not maintain their position and some of them sold away their charges—Ranthambhor and Gwalior—to Rajputs, while the Governors of Ajmer and Nagor failing to withstand Mughal pressure were obliged to seek shelter elsewhere. But in two provinces at a comparatively more distance from Delhi and Agra, two independent Afghan kingdoms were established which could not be suppressed so easily. One of these was the kingdom of Malwa and the other of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

In the reign of Sher Shah, Shujaat Khan was the Governor of Malwa. Under Islam Shah, he was the only notable *amir* who had survived the wrath of the Sultan and who had been reinstated after a summary dismissal.

Condition on the eve of invasion When, after the death of Islam Shah, the Sur empire began to break up, Shujaat Khan declared his independence. His son and successor Baz Bahadur was a contemporary of Akbar. Baz Bahadur was noted for his love of music and reckoned as one of the greatest musicians of his time. Tradition associates his name with that of Rupmati and their love has provided a welcome theme to the poetical muse. Rupmati, an exquisite beauty was the wife of Baz Bahadur and a highly talented singer and Baz Bahadur devoted himself more to the pleasures of the flesh than to the security of his realm.

After the annexation of Gwalior and Ajmer, the southern boundary of Akbar's empire reached the northern frontiers of Malwa. In 1560, Bairam Khan directed Bahadur Khan, the brother of Khan-i-Zaman to lead an invasion into Malwa. But when Bairam Khan himself was relieved of his duties and the

Emperor assumed all powers the scheme for the invasion of Malwa was dropped for the moment.

But as soon as the political atmosphere had, calmed down, the invasion of Malwa was promptly taken up. Adham Khan, the

Adham Khan and
Pir Muhammad
invade Malwa
1560

son of Maham Anaga, the chief nurse of Akbar, and Mulla Pir Muhammad Shirwani were sent at the head of an army. Baz Bahadur suffered a defeat and fled towards the Deccan.

The Mughal generals were cruel by nature and indulged in terrible enormities. Thousands of people were mercilessly done to death. Sayyads and Shaikhs, asking for quarter with *Quran* in their hands were not only not spared but burnt to ensure their eternal damnation. Akbar was greatly incensed at the reports of these wanton cruelties. This was not all, for Adham Khan not only retained most of the rich booty but in flagrant violation of the custom of the day, failed to send to the Emperor even the ladies of the harem and the war-elephants. Hence Akbar decided to pay a surprise visit to Malwa pretending to go on a hunt. It was only Maham Anaga's personal influence that shielded her son and assuaged the feelings of the Emperor by inducing Adham Khan to apologise to the Emperor and surrender him as he had withheld, that he was allowed to continue in Malwa for sometime.

A little later, Adham Khan was summoned to court and Pir Muhammad acted as the interim Governor. Pir tried to destroy all remnants of Baz Bahadur's power and with this object in view, he exterminated all suspected Afghan loyalists and sought to capture Baz Bahadur who had fled into Khandesh. Pir Muhammad followed him where his march was throughout accompanied by a reign of terror. Hence local officers rallied their strength to check him. The joint forces of Khandesh and Baz Bahadur inflicted a defeat on him and as he was recrossing the *Narbada* in a headlong retreat, he was drowned. This led to a general uprising in Malwa and Baz Bahadur returned in triumph to assume sovereignty once again.

On hearing of these developments, Akbar directed Abdullah Khan Uzbek to proceed from Kalpi to Malwa. He defeated Baz Bahadur and reestablished the authority of the Emperor. Baz Bahadur now fled to Mewar where Rana Uday Singh granted him refuge and protection. From there he went to Gujerat and finally surrendered himself to the Emperor at Nagor in 1570. He was enrolled as a *mansabdar* of 1000 and was later promoted to the rank of 2000.

After some time, Abdullah Khan began to meditate rebellion for fear of detection of irregularities in his accounts, but

Akbar made a sudden appearance in Malwa in 1564 and inflicted a defeat on him. In 1567, the rebellious Mirzas again entered Malwa and stirred up strife and revolt. But they too were defeated and fled to Gujerat. After that there was no serious challenge to the authority of the Emperor from any quarter. With the surrender of Baz Bahadur, the Afghan kingdom of Malwa finally came to an end and Akbar could use it as a springboard for the conquest of Gujerat and the Deccan.

In comparison to the Afghan kingdom of Malwa, the Afghan kingdom of Bengal and Bihar was far stronger. Its authority had once extended from the eastern boundary of modern Uttar Pradesh to Kuch Bihar in the east and Orissa in the south. It was only after a protracted struggle and at considerable cost in men and money that the Timurids were able to establish their authority in this region. In this region there were many powerful Hindu chiefs too, who sometimes made common cause with the Afghans and at others times warred against them. A detailed account of this region is therefore full of many stirring incidents, diplomatic finesse, political intrigues and rise and fall of new leaders. There is no room in this book to do full justice to all these. Instead, there is a reference only to the most outstanding incidents.

After the death of Sher Shah, Muhammad Khan Sur and Sulaiman Kirrani acquired local authority in Bengal and Bihar. They had formerly acted as Sur nobles but they gradually became autonomous and independent because Islam Shah's wars against Khan was Khan, Haibat Khan Niyazi and Shujaat Khan gave him no leisure to scan the affairs of the nobles in the east. Consequently, Muhammad Khan Sur consolidated his position in Tirhut and Gaur while Sulaiman Kirrani held Magadha or South Bihar. After Islam Shah's death, the Sur power crashed and crumbled in no time. Adil Shah tried to maintain Sur supremacy in the east but he lacked the qualities requisite for the purpose. Consequently, both Sulaiman and Muhammad Khan Sur became independent in their respective regions. This is how the independent Afghan kingdom of Bengal was ushered into existence. The founder of Afghan independence in Bengal assumed the royal style of Shamsuddin Muhammad Shah.

Shamsuddin Muhammad Shah, having consolidated his power in the east, thought of expansion towards the west and occupied Jaunpur. But when he advanced towards Kalpi, Hemu, the minister and general of Adil Shah intercepted him at Chhhibramau and defeated and killed him in the encounter that followed. The Bengal army now decided to retreat and fell back on Jhusi.

Abdullah Khan
Uzbek sent to
Malwa 1562.
Other risings and
disturbances
1564-1567

Bengal, Bihar and
Orissa

Downfall of the Surs
and the foundation
of Afghan independ-
ence in the East

The Sur Sultans of
Bengal 1554-1564

where Khizr Khan, the son of Muhammad Shah was chosen as the next Sultan. Khizr Khan assumed the style of Ghiyasuddin Bahadur Shah and continued the retreat to Bengal. But when he reached Gaur, he discovered that Shahbaz Khan who had been left incharge of the administration at Gaur had been so unnerved by the news of Muhammad Shah's death that he had accepted the suzerainty of Adil Shah. Ghiyasuddin Bahadur therefore had to begin his royal career by defeating and executing Shahbaz Khan as a preliminary to his occupation of Gaur.

The able and energetic Hemu seemed for a time to impart strength and stability to the power of Adil Shah. He drove Taj Khan out of Gwalior and chased out Ibrahim Khan from Bayana. If, on hearing the report of Humayun's death he had not lost his life in an attempt to seize Delhi and Agra, a serious threat to the power of the Surs in Bengal and Kirranis in Bihar would have been created. It was this impending threat which brought Ghiyasuddin Bahadur and Sulaiman Kirrani into a defensive alliance for cooperation against a common enemy. Taj Khan Kirrani also joined to his brother. But the death of Hemu proved fatal to the power of Adil Shah and Khan-i-Zaman started an offensive against Jaunpur and Lakhnau. Taking advantage of this position, Ghiyasuddin Bahadur sought to avenge the death of his father by attacking Adil Shah in 1557 with Kirrani's assistance. The victory of the allies at Surajgarh removed all obstacles to their independence in their respective territories.

In 1560, Ghiyasuddin Bahadur died and the wrangle for power among the members of the royal family and the nobility started. This led to a quick change of sovereigns and increased dissensions. Sulaiman Kirrani took advantage of this to conquer and annex the whole of Bengal kingdom, and appointed his brother Taj Khan to rule over it from Gaur.

Sulaiman now became the master of an extensive kingdom comprising Magadha, Tirhut and Bengal. After Taj Khan's death, he made Tanda the headquarters of the Kirranis of Bengal and Bihar a united kingdom of Bengal and Bihar.

1564-1576 Sulaiman was not only a brave general and a capable ruler but also a shrewd diplomat, now secured further accession of strength by diplomacy and war against his neighbours of Kuch-Bihar and Orissa.

Although Akbar was anxious to destroy all vestiges of Afghan power as early as possible, he could not conquer Bihar and Bengal for quite some time due to a number of complications. The

defeat of Hemu was largely the result of Khan-i-Zaman's exertions, who was a partisan of Akbar and the Kirranis. Bairam Khan. Hence, while appointing him as the governor of Sambhal, he was given a long rope to take all possible steps to destroy the power of the Afghans in the east. Khan-i-Zaman gradually acquired great influence in the east and after the downfall and death of Bairam Khan, Jaunpur,

Lakhnau and Benares became centres of Uzbek disaffection. But Akbar was not strong enough to deal with them effectively just then. Hence the Uzbeks retained power in this region upto 1567.

Being convinced of Akbar's displeasure against him, Khan-i-Zaman instead of seeking to destroy their power allied himself with the Kirranis. Thus it was impossible to do anything against the Kirranis as long as the Uzbeks had not been suppressed. But the Uzbeks had a tremendous influence in a vast tract of land extending from Jaunpur to Malwa and counted among their friends some very influential people at the Mughal court. Munim Khan, the new Vakil was himself friendly to them. In the event of an attack by the Emperor they could count upon the support of Mirza Hakim from the west and of Kirranis from the east. Akbar, had, therefore, to use great forbearance in dealing with them. When he was finally convinced of their incurable disloyalty and his own ability to suppress them, he resolved to annihilate them.

In this he did not want that the Kirranis should come to the aid of the Uzbeks, so he sent an envoy to Sulaiman to ensure his non-intervention in the domestic affairs of the Emperor. But as a precaution against possible breach of faith by the Kirranis, he secured an alliance with Raja Harichandan Mukunda Deva (1560-1568) of Orissa who agreed to invade Bengal and create a diversion if the rear should the Kirranis move west to the assistance of the Uzbeks.

Akbar's campaign against the Uzbeks proved short and swift. This frightened Sulaiman so much that he waited on Munim Khan to inform him that herecognized the suzerainty of the Emperor and would introduce his name in the *Khutba* and the *sikka*. This averted a real danger to Afghan power in the east. Akbar's easy triumph over Mirza Hakim and the Uzbeks had raised the morale of his troops. The Emperor had not forgotten that Sulaiman had tried to capture Mughal territory during the recent disturbances. Moreover, Sulaiman's position was now vulnerable in the east and the south for Nar Narayan the Raja of Kuch Bihar and Mukunda Deva of Orissa might join hands with the Mughals in liquidating the last surviving Afghan power in India. Therefore, Sulaiman's meekness and humility was born out of consciousness of this danger to his very existence. Akbar was easily pacified by this move because he did not consider it prudent to involve himself in a war in Bengal as long as Rajastha had not been subdued. Besides, with Sulaiman at his knees, there was hardly any good excuse for war. The Kirranis were thus spared for the time being.

Relieved of danger from the west Sulaiman attempted expansion in other directions, and when the Emperor was busy with his wars in Rajputana, he invaded the beginning and conquered Orissa. Sulaiman died in 1572 and was succeeded by his son Bayazid, who fell a victim to the assassin's knife. Daud, the younger bro-

ther of Bayazid avenged his brother's death by murdering the assassin and mounted the throne. He was vain and fickle minded and could hardly distinguish between friend and foe and under the influence of base flatterers, he launched upon a policy which was to end in his own ruin.

He began by assuming the title of Shah, the natural corollary of which was the substitution of the Emperor's name in the *Khutba* and the *sikka* by his own. He next built up a powerful and numerous army, consisting of 40,000 cavalry, 1,40,000 infantry, 3,500 elephants and 20,000 matchlockmen. He also collected a good number of boats and river craft. With these preparations, he ordered his general, Lodi Khan to occupy the Mughal frontier outpost of Zamaniya and in his absence had his son-in-law murdered. Later, probably on the advice of Shri Hari Kayastha, when Lodi Khan returned he had him murdered too. Shri Hari now became the conscience keeper of Daud who conferred on him the title of Vikramaditya. These acts alienated the sympathies of a section of the Afghans.

Daud had launched a war against the Mughals in the hope that the Emperor, faced as he was with a revolt in Gujerat, would not be able to spare sufficient troops to meet the Bengal army. But his hopes were belied Occupation of Bengal by Munim Khan 1574-1575 and Munim Khan chased him out of Uttar Pradesh into Bihar. The Emperor rushed reinforcements despite rains and himself marched to supervise the operations. Daud was besieged at Patna and on his flight from there escaped into Bengal. But he was allowed no peace by the imperialists. Munim Khan captured Patna and the Emperor appointed Muzaffar Khan Turbati as the Governor of Bihar. The latter carried on a vigorous campaign against the Afghan stragglers and local chiefs so that the whole of Bihar was cleansed of Afghan rebels. Munim Khan, meanwhile, advanced upon Teliagarhi and having captured it made for Tanda. After the fall of the Afghan capital, he halted his pace to consolidate his gains and finished the conquest of Bengal by occupying Midnapur, Burdwan, Satgaon and other places. Daud now fled to Orissa.

Munim Khan and certain other Mughal generals now favoured a respite. But Todar Mal did not approve of this policy. He was in favour of hunting down Daud to his last refuge and finishing him off for good. The rank and file as well as the leadership, however, did not support him. When Daud learnt of the dissensions in the Mughal camp, he made a sudden swoop on the camp of Todar Mal who boldly met the attack and asked for reinforcements. Munim Khan personally came up to his assistance. But the day went so badly for the Mughal army that it earned the nickname of Mughalmari (destructive of Mughals). Two of its wings were broken and routed and Munim Khan himself received severe injuries. But Todar Mals's cool-headed determina-

tion retrieved the day and he turned a certain defeat into a glorious victory. Daud sued for peace and Munim Khan decided to accept his terms. But Todar Mal opposed cessation of hostilities when the enemy was weak and distracted—but Akbar supported Munim Khan and recalled Todar Mal. Peace was finally restored in 1575. Daud acknowledged the suzerainty of Akbar, promised to surrender all his elephants and treasure, give his nephew Muhammad as a hostage and to wait on the Emperor personally shortly afterwards. In return for this, he was allowed to retain his possessions in Orissa as a Mughal vassal.

Later, as fresh dissensions started among the Mughal generals, Daud started a fresh attempt to win back his lost possessions. Fresh outbreak of Munim Khan failed to suppress the rebels. hostilities and he died of injuries received in course of death of Daud 1576 fighting. Akbar therefore, sent Khan-i-Jahan and Todar Mal to take charge of the war. They found that the Afghans had acquired considerable power, so they moved warily in collaboration with Muzaffar Khan, the governor of Bihar, and gradually mounted a successful counter-offensive; recaptured the capital and defeated Daud in the battle of Rajmahal. Daud escaped once more but he was traced in his sylvan haunt, captured and beheaded, his head being sent to the Emperor as a proof of his death. This put an end to the last Afghan kingdom in India. Never again did the Afghans secure independent political dominion in any part of India and Mughal sovereignty was firmly established. Local Afghan chiefs alone or in collaboration with Hindu Rajas like Kedar Roy of Vikrampur, Kandarpa Narayan of Chandradip and Pratapaditya of Jessore, did occasionally raised the banner of revolt but they never constituted a challenge to Mughal sovereignty.

In no part of India was there any vestige of Afghan independence left. But this was not the only result of this successful war. The Mughals secured another maritime province and their expansion towards the east and the south became easier. The climate of Bengal was liked by none and nobody wanted to be its governor and so Bengal remained a problem province for the Mughals. Being far removed from the capital, it was regarded as a place for penal punishment. And it was for this reason that local disaffection could not be stamped out as effectively as in other provinces. The result being, that there were frequent recurrences of disturbances in Bengal.

The conquest of Bengal theoretically implied extension of Akbar's authority over Orissa as well. But the Afghans retained power in parts of that province for some years. Conquest of Orissa After Daud's death, Qatlu Khan Nuhani 1599-1592 succeeded to the *de facto* leadership of the

Afghans and by the treaty of 1584, he acquired a status analogous to that of Daud under the treaty of 1575. In 1590, Raja Man Singh made another attempt to break the power of the Afghans and even secured some success but he was in such a hurry to return to Bihar that instead of exploiting the death of Qatlu to Mughal advantage, he recognized the authority of his son as a successor to his power and influence. He was, however, subject to the following terms of vassalage: (1) inclusion of the name of the Emperor in the *Khutba* and the *sikka*, (2) recognition of the Emperor's direct authority over the Jagannath Temple and the land attached to it and (3) to desist from oppressing the Hindu landholders. Isa Khan Nuhani had acted as the principal mediator in securing acceptance of these terms, but he happened to die soon after and the Afghans in flagrant violation of the treaty attacked the Jagannath Temple. Consequently, Man Singh took the offensive again. The power of the Nuhanis was now thoroughly crushed and their partisans were obliged to submit to the Emperor. With a view to secure Hindu support against the Afghans, Man Singh recognized Rana Chandra Deva, the Raja of Khurda as Gajpati and Maharaja of Orissa and assigned to him the government of south Orissa. This virtually stamped out Afghan disaffection.

The foregoing accounts amply prove that the Afghans were lacking neither in daring nor valour, nor in love for independence.

Causes of the loss of sovereignty by Afghans They had the capacity to throw up new leaders and secure cooperation from the Hindu chiefs.

But despite all this, they failed to prevent the liquidation of their power. The reasons for this lie almost on the surface. They lacked in solidarity, amity and discipline. They were so vain that whosoever acquired some military power regarded it as an imperative of duty to found an independent dynasty of his own. Whatever success they did secure against the Mughal generals was not due to superiority in arms or talents but due to dissensions among their adversaries, preoccupation of the Emperor in other spheres or lack of initiative and enterprise among local officers. No sooner had the Emperor turned his special attention towards them or deputed energetic officers in the affected regions, the Afghans suffered defeat after defeat. Akbar as an empire builder was a farsighted statesman; he never took a false step in the hour of crisis or distress. The Afghans, therefore, could never secure any lasting benefits from the Emperor's difficulties. Sometimes, in utter defiance of weather and counsels of prudence, he bore down upon the enemy at an unexpectedly tremendous speed so that they were caught unawares and their calculations miscarried. Akbar's state policy was so liberal and tolerant that he secured the support of the Hindus in an ever-increasing measure. So also, the offending Afghans always had a chance of securing a pardon and a place in the state service pro-

vided they sincerely disabused their minds of rebellion. The result of this was that the Afghans got divided in their own ranks—the unbending desperadoes gradually died out or were killed, while the moderates discreetly submitted and became loyalists.

We have noticed in the foregoing chapter that Akbar and his successors were not in favour of ending Rajput ruling families.

Rajput Policy v. Afghan policy They aimed at converting them into subordinate allies. That is why they opposed, if ever, individuals rather than ruling houses, and in case of rebellion or intransigence on the part of a Rajput chief they tried to supersede him by another member of his own family. They seemed to have decided to retain Rajput ruling families as an integral part of their political system. But the Afghans were treated differently. Towards them, the Mughals were more stiff and unrelenting. Under stress of circumstances, an Afghan prince might be temporarily tolerated as a vassal, but this was never a part of their general policy. In Malwa, Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, a uniform policy was followed—deposition of the ruling Afghan family, occupation of as much of their territory as possible and securing the submission of subordinate Afghan nobles by the lure of office and *jagir*, but, insisting on the imperial right to transfer them to other *jagirs* or fresh jobs.

What was this difference in policy due to? In the first place the Rajputs were true to their word and, once they had submitted, they regarded rebellion or treachery unworthy of their honour and family pride. But the Afghans being essentially selfish could not always be relied upon. Secondly, the Rajputs might have kept the possibility of the establishment of an all-India empire as a cherished goal in the realm of thought but in practice they were satisfied with mere local autonomy. The Afghans on the other hand had been the masters of an extensive north-Indian empire and could not wholly divest their political ambitions of it. Consequently, it was far more difficult for them to become sincerely loyal to their dispossessors. Thirdly, Akbar was conscious of the fact that he had seized sovereignty from the Afghans towards whom strong sections of the people still had some tenderness of feeling. Hence, continuance of their ruling dynasties was fraught with serious danger to the security of the empire. That is why Akbar never accorded to any non-Rajput ruling family—whether Hindu or Muslim—the generous treatment, reserved exclusively for the Rajputs. Destruction of their ruling families was as essential for the expansion and security of the empire as the continuance of subordinate Rajput states was in its building up and expansion. It was thus an inevitable necessity that the Afghan policy of Akbar had to be different and distinct from his policy towards the Rajputs.

Further Readings

1. Dorn—*History of the Afghans*.
2. R. D. Banerji—*History of Bengal*, Chapter, XII.
3. R. D. Banerji—*History of Orissa*, Chapter, XXIII—XXIV.
4. Smith—*Akbar the Great Mughal*, Chapters, II-V and VII.

(See also the list at the end of Chapter, V.)

CHAPTER VIII

CONQUEST OF GUJERAT

The defeat of Ibrahim Lodi and the foundation of a new dynasty by Babar at Delhi and Agra synchronised with the accession of the last great ruler of Gujerat, Bahadur Shah. The early years of his reign proved a great success and he was able to establish a large kingdom by successful aggression against his neighbours. But, when he sought to set aside Humayun and capture Delhi and Agra, he not only failed in the attempt but also lost his kingdom in the bargain. It was his sheer good luck that Askari and his lieutenants neglected their duties which made his return possible, and later, by their flight towards Delhi and Agra indeed rendered all opposition by Humayun impossible. Just then, Sher Khan became another serious headache for Humayun. Consequently, Bahadur Shah found no difficulty in re-occupying his lost kingdom in 1536.

But while Bahadur Shah as a ruler possessed many admirable qualities, he had one serious defect. In a state of excitement, he would, sometimes, behave like a mad man and lose all sense of propriety. It was this that ultimately cost him his life. In his anxiety to secure Portuguese assistance against Humayun, he granted them many concessions including the right to build a fort at Diu. Later when the fort had been built, he realized how adversely it affected his position and was eager to put an end to their machinations by destroying their power. He was particularly annoyed with them because they maltreated *Haj* pilgrims and Indian sailors, and indulged in wanton destruction of coastal towns and made all attempts at naval construction impossible. Bahadur Shah, conscious of his inability to face their navy had been obliged to surrender them the ports of Bassein, Thana and others. He, therefore, planned to build up a coalition of maritime states of India and secure the aid of the Turkish fleet.

The Portuguese got scent of these hostile intentions of Bahadur Shah and, were besides, great fanatics and sworn enemies of Islam. They were aware and proud of their naval superiority and the declared policy of Nuno de Cunha (1529-1538) was to use this superiority for burning and pillaging Muslim cities and occupying their coastal regions where possible. Nuno had used both diplomacy

and war to secure Diu and in 1535 he had secured permission to fortify it. But the enormous revenue from customs duties collected there still went entirely to the Sultan. He could stoop to anything to divert this revenue to the Portuguese coffers. The Portuguese were aware of these sentiments and were anxious to encompass the death of Bahadur Shah.

It was in these circumstances that Nuno received an invitation from Bahadur Shah to meet him at Diu. Nuno came to Diu all right but his suspicions of foul play kept him away from the meeting and he feigned illness. In February 1537 Bahadur Shah attended by only thirteen persons, himself called on Nuno, and in course of the talk could easily see that he was not in safe company. He, therefore, abruptly hurried away to his boat. The Portuguese were unwilling to let him escape and tried to detain him. This led to a scuffle in which Bahadur Shah lost his life and his body was washed away by the sea. Commissariat holds that an analysis of the Portuguese, Dutch and Persian sources give the impression that the responsibility for Bahadur's death rests on the Portuguese but Bahadur Shah himself invited the evil by his indiscreet visit.

On Bahadur's death, the Portuguese occupied Diu. Bahadur Shah's successor Muhammad Shah III could not bear the shock of the late Sultan's death and passed away soon after. Mahmud Shah III, a nephew of Bahadur was then placed on the throne, but as he was only eleven years of age, there was a scramble for the office of regency among the nobles. This made the Sultan's position still weaker. In 1538, the Sultan of Turkey sent a naval squadron under Sulaiman Pasha to aid the Gujeratis against the Portuguese. But his cruelties led to dissensions so that he did not receive full local support and ultimately had to return without accomplishing anything. This raised the power and prestige of the Portuguese enormously. Consequently, they forced a treaty on the Gujerat government which assured them a third of the revenues of Diu and in return they promised to surrender the town and to desist from further fortifications. In 1546, the Gujeratis once more tried to drive the Portuguese out from Diu but they failed in the attempt and Portuguese hold on Diu became final.

On attaining majority, Mahmud Shah sought to acquire real powers of government and in the pursuit of this object had a number of nobles murdered. This made others suspicious and hostile, but before they could do anything, the Sultan was murdered by one of his own favourites, Burhan. He also murdered a batch of thirteen nobles and sought to mount the throne. But Etmad Khan, the guardian of the royal *harem* opposed the move and in collaboration with other nobles overpowered and slew him. Prince Ahmad was now placed on the throne as Ahmad Shah III (1554-1561).

The new Sultan was a mere boy and so a regent had to be appointed once again. Almost by common consent, the post was offered to Etmad Khan and he dominated

Gujarat in the days of Akbar

Gujarat politics during the next two decades. The Sultanate of Gujarat, however, continued to grow weaker and weaker. The principal *amirs* divided the kingdom amongst them and became autonomous in their respective regions. This state of anarchy enabled the Portuguese to occupy Daman while the ruler of Khandesh seized certain districts close to his frontiers. Besides the native *amirs*, the few Afghan and Abyssinian leaders all started a scramble for power. War, intrigue and political murders became the order of the day. This reduced the power of the Sultan almost to a nullity. Etmad Khan retained supremacy in the central region and getting dissatisfied with Ahmad Shah had him murdered and placed a nondescript lad of twelve named Habib on the throne under the style of Muzaffar Shah III (1561-1573).

The minority of three successive rulers—Mahmud, Ahmad and Muzaffar wholly undermined the vigour of central authority: After the accession of Muzaffar, internal disorders became worse. Many factors contributed to this. The Portuguese had seized a number of Gujarati ports which not only lowered the prestige of the local sultanate but also dried up a lucrative source of revenue. Etmad Khan being an adept in political finesse and intrigue retained the office of the regent but he lacked the necessary vigour and ability to put down rivals to his power. Gujarat consequently, became an arena of conflicting groups, each anxious to outdo the other. Etmad Khan was the leader of the native group and held Ahmadabad, Sabarmati, Mahe and Cambay. Sher Khan and Musa Khan Fuladi were the leaders of the Afghans who held the Patan region. The most powerful Abyssinian nobleman was Changez Khan who held Surat, Broach, Baroda and Champaign. Jujhar Khan and Ulugh Khan who held high offices at the centre also belonged to this group. Tatar Khan Ghorî held Junagarh and Sorath while Syed Miran Bokhari and his son Hamid Khan held Dhandhuka and Dholka. After 1566-1567, the descendants of Muhammad Sultan Mirza entered Gujarat as political refugees but soon they too became contestants for power. These internecine quarrels and rivalries sapped the foundations of the kingdom.

It was in such circumstances that Akbar decided to invade Gujarat in 1572. Numerous considerations recommended such a move. Akbar aspired to establish a unified government at least over northern India. He was convinced that the local rulers were neither sufficiently enlightened nor much liked by the people. Apart from personal ambition, he thought that it was in the wider interests of the people that their degenerate rulers should be superseded. Besides, Gujarat had once formed a part of his

Causes of Akbar's invasion of Gujarat

father's dominion so that its conquest was necessary for vindicating family honour. Then again, it was a very rich province, not only was its soil good but it commanded a large maritime trade which brought enormous wealth to its coffers year after year. Annexation of Gujerat, could therefore, improve financial resources of the Empire. Lastly, there was the desire to expel the Portuguese who had seized Gujerat territory, misappropriated its revenue from customs and were a constant source of annoyance and insult to the Haj pilgrims. As the Emperor indicated in his letter to Abdullah Khan Uzbeg in 1586, it was a part of his desire to liquidate foreign European pockets on Indian soil by coming into direct contact with them.

Other reasons were the rising power of the Afghans in northern Gujerat, the presence of the Mirzas in southern Gujerat and a possible threat to the security of the empire if either of the two seized the whole of the province. The Afghan leader Sher Khan Fuladi had actually moved on Ahmadabad and was laying siege to it. Shah Mirza, Ibrahim Husain Mirza and Muhammad Husain Mirza, sons of the notorious Muhammad Sultan Mirza had plans for seizing the capital and the kingdom and had already secured a strong foothold in southern Gujerat. Etmad Khan the *Wazir* was unequal to the task of meeting the Afghan or the Mirza menace alone. In order to save his own skin, he appealed to the Emperor for help playing upon his fears of accession of strength to the Mirzas and the Afghans. Akbar also knew that Muzaffar Shah, the nominal ruler, commanded no respect in any quarter. Etmad Khan had formerly stated on oath that he was a natural son of Sultan Mahmud Shah but many had disbelieved his story. Now Etmad Khan himself confessed that he had told a lie in public interest. This further scandalized the worthless monarch. Akbar, therefore, thought that the conquest of Gujerat would be an easy affair and might secure him, at least in the initial stages, some local support. Akbar therefore decided to invade Gujerat on receipt of Etmad Khan's appeal for help and offer of cooperation.

He left Fatehpur Sikri in July 1572 and on reaching Ajmer sent Khan-i-Qalan at the head of 10,000 troops as an advance party while he himself followed at a slower pace. On hearing the report of Akbar's approach, the Afghans lost their nerve, raised the siege and fled towards Junagarh. Akbar deputed Man Singh who pursued and defeated the son of Sher Khan and captured a rich booty. The Emperor was encamped at Patan when he received the report of Man Singh's success. Patan was soon occupied and the Emperor moved on to Ahmadabad. Here he met with no serious opposition. Etmad Khan, Sayyad Hamid Bokhari, Ulugh Khan and Jujhar Khan met the Emperor half-way and

Annexation of
Gujerat 1572-1537

submitted to his authority. Akbar treated them graciously and promised to entrust the administration of Gujerat to Etmad Khan with a free choice of his own supporters. This made them enthusiastic supporters of the Emperor.

Sultan Muzaffar Shah was captured and kept under surveillance. The task of conquest was over even before the capital had been reached. On his arrival at Ahmadabad, Akbar assigned the government of northern Gujerat to Aziz Koka. In the south, where the Mirzas were in power, it was assigned to Etmad Khan. This was probably done with three motives — (1) to consolidate imperial authority in the half-subdued north by entrusting it to trustworthy personal followers of the Emperor, (2) to utilise the local nobles in the suppression of the Mirzas and (3) incidentally to test their loyalty and competence. But this arrangement caused great dissatisfaction among the Gujerati nobles. They regarded their present assignment as a virtual dismissal and banishment from the capital. On getting scent of this, the Emperor disarmed their hostility by putting them under surveillance.

Akbar now proceeded to Cambay where he had his first view of the sea and acquired first-hand experience of the position and prosperity of foreign traders. Akbar might possibly have entertained the hope that the Mirzas

Suppression of the
Mirzas: The Battle
of Sarnal (December
1572)

on learning of his arrival at Cambay would come to wait on him and seek his forgiveness. But they were found instead of stirring up a most determined opposition. Ibrahim

Husain Mirza killed Rustam Khan the son of Changez Khan and occupied Broach. He next proceeded at the head of an army to assume the leadership of rebels in the north. When Akbar heard of this, he was greatly incensed and made a two-pronged attack on Surat and Baroda. He himself advanced to Sarnal to engage Ibrahim Mirza who was reported to be close by. Throwing all discretion to the winds he led a mere handful of men against a whole army and would have paid dearly for his rashness but for the timely interposition by Bhupat, a brother of Bhagwan Das who sacrificed himself to save the Emperor. The rebels were at last defeated and Ibrahim Husain fled for safety. He was again contacted in the Punjab and fell a prisoner. His fate is not known but he was either killed or pined away to death.

The Mirzas left their family and treasure at Surat and after the defeat of Ibrahim Husain, his brothers Shah Mirza and Muhammad Husain marched north to form a junction with Sher Khan Fuladi. Their joint forces moved towards Patan and laid siege to it. The imperial nobles in the north led by Khan-i-Azam and Aziz Koka met and defeated the rebels, and scattered their forces. The Emperor in the meantime planned to seize Surat, hearing which the Mirzas fled towards the Deccan and for the time being created no further trouble.

The Battle of
Patan and fall of
Surat (1573)

The Emperor's troops laid siege to Surat and captured it after a month and a half. Here he met the Portuguese once again and probably discussed with them the question of *Haj* pilgrims from the Mughal Court. Akbar treated the Portuguese with courtesy as he had been impressed by their strength and was anxious to keep them away from helping the rebels.

Akbar felt that he could not safely return to Sikri. He therefore went to Ahmadabad via Broach and proceeded to Sikri after making final arrangements about the Government of Gujerat. Aziz Koka was left as governor at Ahmadabad while his uncle Khan-i-Kalan was posted at Patan and Qutbuddin Khan was assigned Broach.

When after a journey of two months Akbar reached Sikri he had no misgivings about the peace in Gujerat. But no sooner had he left, signs of rebellion began to appear. The Abyssinians were dissatisfied because one of their leaders Jujhar Khan had been crushed to death under the feet of an elephant at the Emperor's order on the charge of a previous murder. The Afghans, of course, had never submitted to the Emperor. These two groups now combined under the leadership of Ikhtiyar-ul-mulk Habshi and raised the standard of revolt at Idar. Muhammad Husain Mirza returned from the Deccan, recaptured Cambay and Broach, established liaison with the rebels at Idar and laid siege to Ahmadabad.

When Akbar learnt that there had been a general conflagration in Gujerat in which Mughals, Abyssinians, Afghans, Rajputs and natives of Gujerat had made a common cause against the imperialists, he decided to reach there within the shortest possible time.

By forced marches, he performed the miraculous feat of covering 800 miles in 11 days and set up his standard on the banks of the Sabarmati. The agents of Muhammad Husain had brought him the report that a fortnight back the Emperor was at Sikri. That is why, even when Akbar's troops were sighted, the Mirza refused to believe that the Emperor himself could have arrived. As soon as Akbar had crossed the river, fighting started. The rebel army was estimated to be 20,000 strong while the Emperor had only 300 followers. Yet he would brook no delay and made a rash attack, once-more having a hair-breadth escape. His confidence, however, was finally rewarded with a complete victory and the capture of Muhammad Husain. Another army of 5000 troops led by Ikhtiyar-ul-mulk soon appeared and attacked the Emperor, but this too was defeated and its leader killed in course of fighting. When this second contest started, Muhammad Husain Mirza was executed as a precautionary measure. Shah Mirza, the third remaining brother was never heard of again and the authority of the Emperor was firmly established over Gujerat. The flames of a general conflagration which threatened to envelope the whole of the province were quenched for ever by a day's fighting and the

Emperor returned to his capital after making necessary arrangements for the government of Gujerat. The Emperor reached Sikri after 43 days. This short, swift and successful campaign has received high praise at the hands of modern and contemporary historians who described it as unique in military history of the land and paid a high tribute to the Emperor's marvellous speed and indefatigable exertions.

Sultan Muzaffar Shah III spent over ten years in prison from 1572 to 1583. He later effected his escape, fled to Gujerat and after a brief span of power was easily overpowered and fled from pillar to post to save his skin. Finally in 1593 he ended his miserable career by committing suicide. With his death the ruling dynasty of Gujerat came to an end.

War and insecurity had upset the fiscal organisation of Gujerat. The Emperor assigned the task of reorganising the finances first to an able officer named Asaf Khan and appointed him as *Diwan* and *Bakhshi* of the province. Later he deputed Todar Mal specially for this purpose. Todar Mal fixed the details of a new policy within six months and submitted his report to the Emperor. This was approved and enforced, and assured to the Emperor an annual revenue of 50 lakhs.

The conquest and annexation of Gujerat proved beneficial to the Emperor in more ways than one. It imparted cohesion and strength to the empire by destroying the western refuge of the disaffected Afghans and put an end to the Mirza menace. It brought the Emperor in direct touch with the Portuguese and made him conscious of the necessity to destroy their power. But as he never had the leisure and the opportunity to build a navy for himself, he sealed the sea-route for Haj pilgrims lest his imperial dignity be compromised by their submission to humiliating regulations of the Portuguese. The Emperor acquired a number of sea-ports and as the volume of foreign trade increased, his financial resources were considerably augmented. He improved his artillery by manufacturing better guns in imitation of the Sulaimani guns captured during the campaign. The conquest of Gujerat also necessitated occupation or subjugation of Mewar as it lay on the direct route to that province. Twice during the campaign the Emperor had tried to subdue the Rana of Udaypur but the Rana had refused to submit to his authority though he abstained from interfering in the march of Mughal troops through his territory. The war for the subjugation of Mewar continued upto 1614 in the reign of Jahangir when after a struggle of over forty years the Rana of Mewar submitted to the Mughal Emperor. Then, Todar Mal's fiscal arrangement for Gujerat served as a

model for the whole empire. In course of the Gujerat campaign, the Emperor came in contact with many distinguished saints and scholars of different religions who exercised great influence on his future religious policy.

Further Readings

1. Commissariat—*History of Gujerat*, Chapters. XXVI to XXXIX.
2. Smith—*Akbar the Great Moghul* Chapter, IV and VII.

(See also the list at the end of chap. V).

CHAPTER IX

CONSOLIDATION OF THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER

Since pre-history, all the invaders of Northern India had come by the passes in the north-western frontier. Among these, the Khurram, the Gomal, the Bolan and the Khair-
The Problem of the North-Western Frontier bar formed the principal routes. Hence for the security of India, it was necessary to guard the entrances of these passes by strong fortifications and to check all intending invaders at their western approaches. In ancient times, dynasties like the Mauryas and the Guptas had tried to push the Indian frontier to the Sulaiman range. While the Sulaiman range was regarded as the western-most extension of our north-western frontier, the Indus was regarded the eastern-most limit. The actual frontier therefore in different periods varied between the Indus and the Sulaiman range. Even if the Indus were accepted as the natural frontier, it was desirable that its entire valley should be held by a single power. If the Timurids were to determine their frontier in this wise, it was necessary they should have under their possession Kashmir, Kabul, Ghazni, Qandahar, Baluchistan, Makran and Sindh. Notable feature of this region is that the nature of the terrain has made the local populace averse to submission to any authority for long. This characteristic, no doubt, presented difficulties to an invader but at the same time it also rendered establishment of any stable and peaceful government in the region extremely precarious. Thus from the point of view of security, it has necessary to keep this freedom-loving volatile community under some sort of discipline.

Since the days of Babar, Kabul, Ghazni, Qandahar and Badakhshan had been held by the Timurids. But there were three serious problems here. The rulers of Persia always had their eye on Qandahar and it was their constant endeavour to bring that strategic fort town and famous trade mart under their permanent authority. On the other hand, the Timurid rulers of India regarded, possession of Qandahar as essential to their security. Qandahar was therefore, a constant bone of contention between them. To the north of the Timurid possessions lay the Uzbeks who had deprived the Timurids of all their central Asian possessions. They had their eyes on Ghazni, Kabul, Qandahar, and Badakhshan as well, and their pressure on Badakhshan was constantly increasing. In the reign of Akbar Badakhshan was lost to the Uzbeks and Uzbek power centred in Badakhshan constituted a serious menace to the security of the frontier. Lastly, there was the problem of Ghazni and Kabul. The Timurids had a dangerous tradition of dividing their empire among their sons,

consequently, whenever a Timurid prince was appointed as governor of Kabul and Ghazni, the threat of civil war was always there. At least this was found to be true for the reigns of Humayun and Akbar.

During the days of the Sultanate of Delhi, the problem of defence of the north-western frontier played an important part in the change of dynasties and the downfall of the Sultanate. Whosoever succeeded to the dominions of Mahmud of Ghazni or Muizuddin Muhammad of Ghor began to cherish the ambition of establishing

Failure of the north-western frontier policy of the Sultans of Delhi

his suzerainty over India. Yahdoz and the Shah of Khwarizm constituted a threat to the integrity of India in this very sense. But when the Mongol avalanche swept away all the Muslim states of central and western Asia, the danger to the sole surviving Muslim Sultanate of Delhi became serious indeed. During the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries, the Sultans of Delhi passed through a terrible ordeal on account of recurring Mongol invasions. It was noticed, that once the enemy had entered the Indus basin it became difficult to check his advance. Time and again the Mongols had dashed on to Delhi, the Ganges-Jumna Doab or Rajasthan, and even when they were forced to retire it was only after causing grievous losses to life and property of the people. The forts commanding the routes did not always succeed in holding up their advance. This was mainly due to the fact that the Sultans did not control the passes. Another lesson of the history of the Sultans was, that a defensive policy did not ensure effective security. Often offence was found to be the best defence. Besides, it was noticed that the policy of treating the opponents as permanent enemies who must be resisted by military force alone had either been unsuccessful or very costly. Diplomacy on the other hand had often yielded much better results as is shown by events of the reigns of Iltutmish, Balban, Jalaluddin Khilji and Muhammad bin Tughluq. Depending on mere military force was fraught with dangers as the warden of the marches became so powerful as to occupy the throne and found a new dynasty, or in going over to the enemy upset the entire defence mechanism.

As in many other spheres, Akbar took a comprehensive view of the problem of frontier defence and formulated a policy which served as a beacon light to his successors.

Elements of Akbar's policy

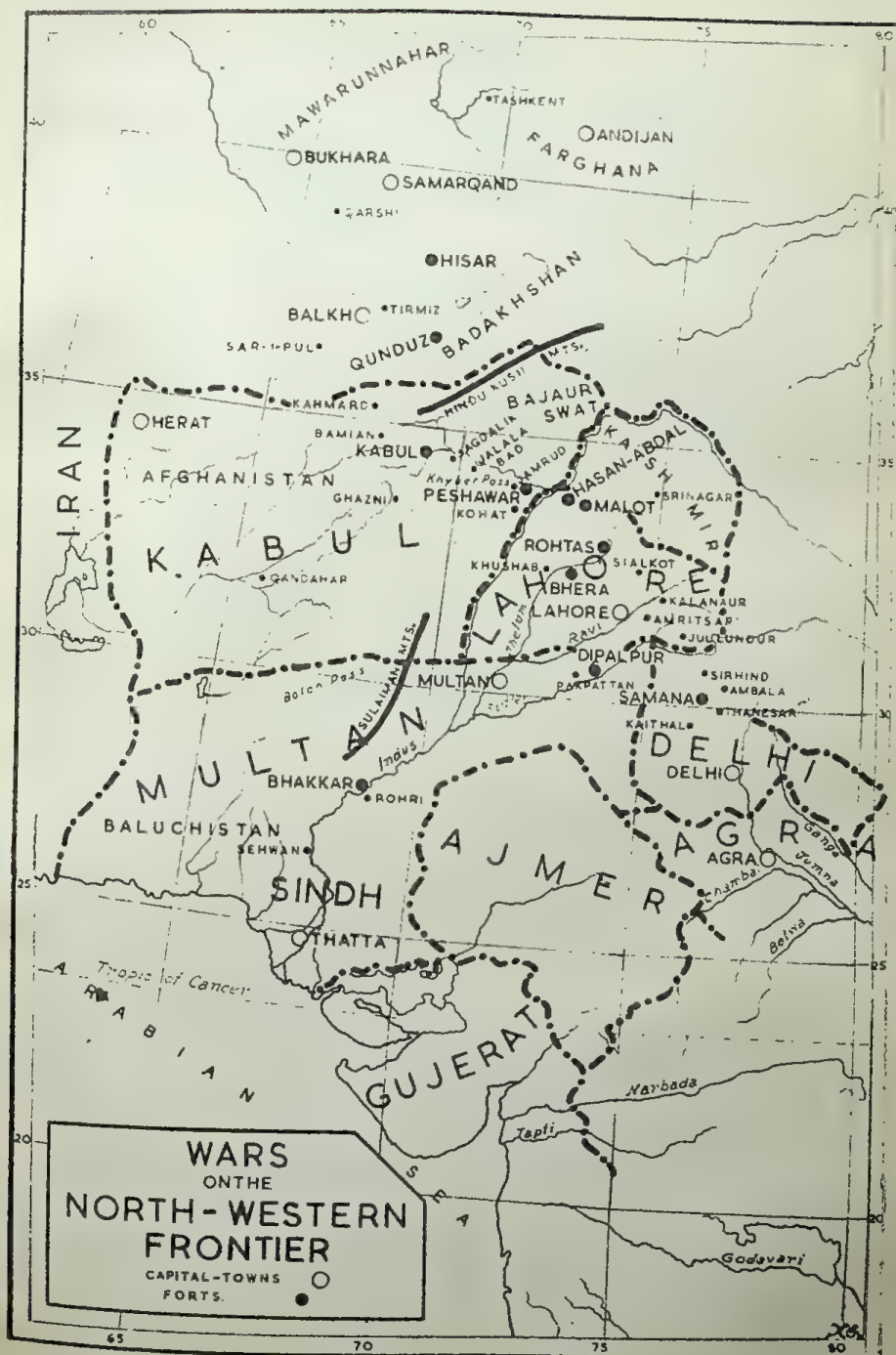
From the Kashmir valley in the north to Sindh in the south he sought to occupy both the eastern and the western parts of the Indus valley. He established diplomatic ties with the Safawis of Persia and the Uzbeks of Central Asia though he did not neglect perfecting his war-machine as well. His policy to keep the Afghan tribes under control was also relatively successful. He avoided conflict with the Timurid rulers of Badakhshan and Kabul and regarded himself as their

suzerain and protector and wished to establish his permanent rule over Qandahar and Badakhshan.

Babar had taken precautions for the safety of Kabul and Badakhshan at the time of his invasion of India. His own son Relations with Kabul: Kamran had been left in charge there. In Mirza Hakim deference to his father's wishes, Humayun appointed governor had confirmed Kamran as the governor of Kabul. But as seen in a foregoing chapter concessions to Kamran evoked in him jealousy and hatred rather than a sense of gratitude. Formality apart, Kamran regarded himself as the successor of his father rather than as a governor of Humayun in that region. This was dictated not by mere self-centred ambition but the Timurid practice of dividing the empire among the sons, who also acquired an autonomous status on the death of the father, subject to a mere formal suzerainty of the eldest son. Humayun suffered greatly because of this arrangement. But when he was able to recover his lost dominion in India, he too, adopted the policy of dividing the empire, assigning Kabul to Mirza Hakim and nominating Akbar as heir to the throne in India.

At the time of Humayun's death, Hakim was a mere child. Hence the government of Kabul was carried on by Munim Khan, Sulaiman's designs the regent of Hakim and Mah Chuchak Begam, his mother. On the death of Humayun, against Kabul (1556-1564) when Akbar ascended the throne, Munim Khan acknowledged his authority and as long as he was the regent he did not allow any rebellious or hostile tendencies to develop. But he was forced by circumstances to have recourse to a line of action which was not in keeping with Akbar's dignity and prestige. He found himself unable to withstand Sulaiman's attack on Kabul. Just then the success of Hemu in India had throw into jeopardy the very existence of the Timurid dynasty so that Munim could expect no help from India. In such a predicament, it appeared to him that the only means of preventing outright annexation of Kabul by Sulaiman was to acknowledge his suzerainty. Hence in 1556 he agreed to introduce the name of Sulaiman in the *Khutba*. When Bairam Khan raised the standard of revolt in the Punjab, Munim Khan handed over charge of Kabul to his son Ghani Khan and proceeded to India for the assistance of the Emperor who honoured him with the office of *Vakil* and the title of Khan-i-Khanan. Munim Khan, therefore, stayed on at Agra.

After his departure, Mah Chuchak Begam tried to concentrate all power in her own hands and to repudiate the suzerainty of Akbar. Hence when in 1562, Ghani Khan left the fort on a military errand she never allowed him to return to the fort. Ghani Khan repaired to India and on his report Munim Khan was sent to reassert the sovereignty of Akbar. But Mah Chuchak Begam defeated and drove him back. Akbar made no further attempt to interfere in the internal affairs of Kabul because his position in



India had not acquired sufficient stability to enable him to involve himself in a struggle against Hakim and Sulaiman without endangering the security of his possession in India. Even then, Kabul did not have peace. Shah Abul Maali who had gone to Mecca on escape from prison, returned, and on failing to stir up trouble here had gone to Kabul to bolster up the claims of Hakim as a rival to Akbar. His hostility to Akbar was his greatest qualification in the eyes of Mah Chuchak Begam who took him into service and began to dream of seating her son with his aid on the throne of Delhi and Agra. She offered the hand of her daughter in marriage to him so that he had free access to the innermost circle. But Shah Abul Maali was such a vile ungrateful wretch that he formed designs to seize the government of Kabul by murdering Mah Chuchak Begam. Even after the murder of his mother Mirza Hakim apparently did nothing against Shah Abul Maali but sent a secret messenger to Sulaiman seeking his assistance. Sulaiman decided to take full advantage of this situation and in 1564 started at the head of an army. Shah Abul Maali was captured and beheaded and Hakim was restored as the real master of Kabul. But, with a view to retain Kabul under his influence he married his daughter to Hakim and appointed trustworthy officers to take charge in different parts of the province, one of them even acting as Hakim's regent at Kabul.

Ever since the downfall of Bairam Khan, the Uzbeks had begun to defy the orders of the Emperor, but Munim Khan avoided taking any drastic action and was re-

Hakim invades India (1566-1567) repeatedly satisfied with mere expressions of regret. Akbar got so sick of this policy that he decided to suppress the Uzbeks thoroughly. The Uzbeks were conscious of this danger to them and so they thought of replacing him by Mirza Hakim. The latter was invited to invade the Punjab, and no sooner was his arrival reported the Uzbeks rose in rebellion once again and had the *Khutba* read in Hakim's name. Akbar decided to deal first with his brother. But Hakim was utterly unworthy of leading a revolution and no sooner he heard of the Emperor's approach he fled back, without fighting, direct to Kabul. Akbar desisted from pursuing him and directed all his energy in exterminating the Uzbeks. This was the initiation of open hostility between Kabul and Agra.

For the next fourteen years Hakim did nothing to kindle the flames of a civil war. But when after the *fatawa* of the *Qazi* of

Hakim's second invasion of India (1581) Jaunpur in 1580 that *jehad* against Akbar was legal, a group of discontented nobles in Bihar and Bengal raised the standard of revolt and sought to place Hakim on the throne of Agra with Afghan assistance; the danger of a civil war seemed imminent. Akbar's religious views were misrepresented to stir up the passions of the ignorant Muslims. The rebels in Bihar and Bengal read the *Khutba* in Hakim's name and invited him to depose Akbar who had become

an apostate from Islam. There were some courtiers too who were in secret correspondence with Hakim. The agents of Hakim who came to assess the immediate conditions in India contacted only the hostile nobles and carried away the impression that the entire Muslim population had been alienated. The counsellors of Hakim surmised from this that as soon as Hakim would step on Indian soil, the Muslim community as a whole would surge round him in grateful welcome so that the deposition of Akbar would be extremely easy. He, therefore, began by sending Nuruddin and Shadman to invade the Punjab and himself followed at the head of the main army.

Akbar learnt of the treason in which his *wazir* Khwaja Mansur and some other principal *amirs* were involved and realized the gravity of the situation. He therefore, entrusted the suppression of the rebellion in Bengal and Bihar to local officers and sent them whatever reinforcements he could spare. In order to intimidate the traitors in the capital he dismissed Mansur but inflicted no severe penalty on him, primarily, because he was aware of his high talents and, secondly, because he feared it might lead to dangerous repercussions. On hearing of Hakim's arrival, Akbar started for the Punjab accompanied among others by all those who were suspected to be disloyal. Hakim found the conditions far different from what he had been led to believe. The nobles of Lahore were preparing to give him a hot reception to the rather cordial welcome he had hoped for, and the Emperor much less than being confined to the capital was proceeding apace at the head of a powerful army; not prepared for this, he once more retraced his steps to Kabul as ingloriously as in 1567.

But Akbar was unwilling to spare him this time. He sent forward an army under Man Singh and Murad, and himself followed at a slower pace behind. He wanted Hakim to be overawed into surrender. That is why he sent him a *farman* to arrange for

his reception at Kabul. Mirza Hakim could neither put up a bold resistance nor tender a sincere apology. Some of his courtiers were still in seductive correspondence with Akbar's nobles and letters were intercepted. Malice imputed the chief guilt to Mansur who had to be executed. This terrified the others, and all those who had received letters submitted them to the Emperor and appealed for mercy. Akbar graciously forgave them and entered Kabul, free from all anxiety. Mirza Hakim dared not present himself before the Emperor and went into hiding. Akbar even refused to hear his name mentioned in his presence and depriving him of all authority appointed his sister Bakht-un-nissa as the governor of Kabul. A few days later, he returned to India. Hakim was thoroughly humbled and he never again challenged the authority of his elder brother. Akbar on his part, took no notice of his return to Kabul and assumption of power. But when Hakim died, the Emperor annexed the province and

Annexation of
Kabul (1585)

assumed direct responsibility for its government (1585). Henceforward, upto the end of Aurangzeb, reign, the Emperor had no further trouble from the side of Kabul.

The tribal people occupying the borderland between India and Afghanistan were a source of constant headache to the Mughal Emperors in the 16th and the 17th centuries.

Relations with the Tribal people were the most notorious among them were the Yusufzais, the Ghilzais, the Afridis and the Khataks. The disturbances in this region were partly the gift of nature so that success was difficult to obtain. The tribal region is a hilly tract where movement of large armies present serious difficulties. There, it is easier to contend against man than against nature, and the biting cold accompanied by rain and snow is far more dreadful than enemy fire. The Indian soldiers were not afraid of the Afghan adversaries as of the rugged intractable terrain and a highly inclement weather. The tribal people of these lands brooked no outside control. Plunder, murder or holding to ransom if profitable, received the sanction of their crude ethics. Being acquainted with every inch of their land and aware of all possible or impossible routes, they could trap an unwary enemy as easily as they could pull themselves out from a dangerous encirclement. That is why it was impossible to establish a permanent hold on their territory.

Organised raids or revolts among the tribal people generally started when some clever leader was able to whip up their religious frenzy or political ambition. Akbar and his descendants tried to keep them under control, by frowns if possible and by favours if necessary.

Babar and Humayun also had had some trouble in this region. In the reign of Akbar, Bayazid preached Raushaniya doctrines among the tribal people. This engendered great excitement and revolt among the Yusufzais. Akbar sent Zain Khan in 1585 and when he asked for reinforcement sent Birbal and Hakim Abul Fateh. They lacked the ability to act in unison which was a great advantage to the Yusufzais, who in 1585 trapped the imperialists near Malandarai Pass in the Swat valley. There they made such a deadly attack on them that they suffered 8000 casualties including Birbal and a number of other *amirs*. Akbar was stung to the quick by this reverse and deputed Todar Mal to make an example of the Yusufzais. He established fortified outposts at all strategic points, garrisoned them, and carried on a war of ruthless extermination, burning, pillaging and massacring wherever he went. This put an end to all sedition for the time being.

The revolt of the Raushanias proved still more dangerous. Bayazid had asked them to mount their attacks on all sides. He died in 1585 leaving the mantle to his son Jalal who continued to create trouble till 1600 to the point of occupying once even Ghazni. He

Revolt of the Yusufzais (1585-1586)

Revolt of the Raushanias

was later killed and Ahdad became the new leader and carried on the struggle till the end of Jahangir's reign. Khan-i-Dauran, Qiliz Khan, Mahabat Khan and Zafar Khan were tried one after the other but the movement did not abate till Ahdad's death in 1626. The struggle against the Raushanias involved serious losses to both parties and neither spared the other.

After Ahdad's death, his son Abdul Qadir was chosen as the leader of the rebels. He surrounded Zafar Khan on route to Kabul and destroyed the whole force almost to a man. Shah-Jahan tried to end the hostilities by winning over Abdul Qadir but Kamaluddin and Karimdad kept the struggle alive. Shah-jahan thereafter, depended more on diplomacy than on force and his policy on the whole was successful. Abdul Qadir and Khushhal Khatak became imperial pensioners and lent their aid in establishing peace in the affected area.

In the reign of Aurangzeb, the first revolt took place in 1667. In the Swat and Bajaur valleys there now appeared a new leader of the Yusufzais in the person of Bhagu. He proclaimed a certain Muhammad Shah as an independent ruler and received the blessings of the local saint Mulla Chalak. Thereafter, he collected an army and started raiding Mughal outposts at Peshawar and Attock. But Bhagu was defeated with over 2000 casualties by an army sent by the Emperor under the leadership of Kamil Khan. Later Shamsheer Khan and Muhammad Amin Khan were also sent against him and his power was completely destroyed and the disturbance ended.

The rebellion that started in 1672 proved the most dangerous of all. At this time the Afridis rose under the leadership of Akmal. The latter had himself crowned, issued coins in his name and invited the Afghans as a whole to join him in a war against the Timurids. Fortunately for him, his early efforts proved so successful that his fame spread like wild fire all over the tribal area. Muhammad Amin Khan who was sent against him, while proceeding from Peshawar to Kabul was warned of the danger of advancing into their territory but he foolishly persisted till he was firmly in the grip of Akmal. The Mughal army was faced with annihilation from all sides; archers, musketeers and stone-rollers took a toll of over 10,000 dead and 20,000 prisoners who were sold as slaves in central Asian markets. The rebels captured over two crores worth of property and Muhammad Amin was lucky to escape alive.

Khushhal Khan Khatak had cooperated with the Mughals under Shahjahan but Aurangzeb getting suspicious of his bonafides threw him into prison. Later to exploit the traditional enmity between the Khataks and the Yusufzais, he was released in 1667 and employed against Bhagu, but the success of Akmal so impress-

ed Khushhal that he too joined him. This made matters worse than ever.

Aurangzeb deputed Mahabat Khan, Shujaat Khan, Jaswant Singh and others to chastise the rebels but when they failed to suppress them, he personally proceeded against them in 1674. He combined force with diplomacy and bribery. A number of Afghan leaders were won over by promises of pensions, posts and jagirs and were utilized in defeating others or detaching them from the side of the rebels. Consequently, by 1675 the situation considerably improved though fighting still continued. Khushhal Khan kept up the struggle till his death and, even his own son joined the Emperor and was employed against him. Later, when Amir Khan was appointed the governor of Kabul he made a liberal use of gilded diplomacy, and Afghan resistance practically died down.

Although imperial authority over the tribal region continued more or less throughout the period, it had sometimes to face serious disturbances. Their revolt in the reign of Akbar held up the conquest of Kashmir. But as the Emperor remained encamped at Lahore for a long spell of years, his losses were not so heavy. Jahangir and Shahjahan did not suffer much on their account. But in the reign of Aurangzeb, their revolts complicated the problems of the empire and made the task of its enemies easier. For example, the revolt in Rajasthan could have been suppressed by the use of the Afghans, but that being impossible, Durga Das and Raj Singh were indirectly helped by these revolts in their war of independence. It was because of these revolts that the Emperor had to recall a number of capable generals from the Deccan which helped Shivaji to extend his territory and acquire more strength. These risings on the frontier thus, in howsoever small a measure, contributed to the downfall of the empire.

As a part of his general scheme of subjugating the entire Indus valley, Akbar decided to bring Kashmir under his control.

Annexations on
the north-west:
Kashmir (1586)

In 1580, Yusuf Chak a candidate to the throne of Kashmir failed in the contest and fled to Akbar to seek his aid. The Emperor with a view of making the northern link of his north-western frontier more secure by having a friendly vassal on the throne of Kashmir ordered the nobles of the Punjab to lead their forces into Kashmir and place Yusuf on the throne. But the internal politics of Kashmir underwent such a change that Yusuf secured the throne without the assistance of the Emperor. Akbar had hoped that after consolidating his power, Yusuf would come personally to offer his thanks and tender formal submission to the Emperor. But instead of doing so, Yusuf began to rule as an independent prince, but to conciliate the Emperor sent his third son Haidar and later his eldest son Yaqub to wait on him and serve under him.

Akbar was greatly offended by this conduct and as a preliminary to his invasion of Kashmir he sent his troops against the Yusufzais. A little later, an army was sent into Kashmir under the command of Raja Bhagwan Das. Yusuf knew that resistance was doomed to failure, hence he opened negotiations for peace. Bhagwan Das realizing that his soldiers would not be able to stand the wintry conditions granted him comparatively liberal term and the fighting stopped. Yusuf promised to introduce the name of the Emperor in the *Khutba* and the *sikka* and to surrender administration of certain departments to the agents of the Emperor. On being assured of his personal security he even agreed to wait on the Emperor. But Akbar did not approve of the terms and when Yusuf came to meet him, he was arrested and thrown into prison. Qasim Khan was sent to occupy Srinagar and the Kingdom of Kashmir was annexed to the empire and attached to Suba Kabul. Badauni has severely criticised Akbar for the treatment meted out to Yusuf and his son. Although the Emperor was a little hard in ordering his imprisonment and showed scant regard for his status by enrolling him as a *mansabdar* of only 500, but this was mainly due to Yusuf's own disregard of the imperial authority in making his submission as a supplicant for aid. In this context the conduct of Akbar will appear less objectionable than otherwise.

After the conquest of Kashmir, only the southern part of the Indus valley remained outside the Empire. It was ruled by the Afghans who after having lost Kabul and Qandahar to Babar had occupied Sindh.

Sindh (1591). The contemporary ruler of Sindh was Jani Beg Arghun. While Akbar was staying at Lahore, Jani Beg had sent professions of allegiance but had given no positive proof of the truth of this assertion by paying a visit to the Emperor. This could be one of the reasons why Sindh was invaded, but the rationalization of the frontiers demanded its incorporation in the empire. It is possible, Akbar had some sentimental grounds for its annexation as it had been associated with the days of his infancy. But the most important reason was to clear the road for an invasion of Qandahar.

In 1590, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan was appointed governor of Multan and was directed to seize Sindh. Jani Beg was defeated and Sindh passed under the control of the Emperor (1591). Two years later, Jani Beg appeared at the court of Akbar and his conduct was so pleasing to the Emperor that he not only enrolled him as a *mansabdar* of 3000 but offered him the governorship of Sindh.

After the conquest of Sindh, Baluchistan the western part of the Indus valley naturally attracted attention. His army invaded Baluchistan in 1595 and although the Afghans offered resistance they were defeated and accepted the supremacy of the

Baluchistan and
Makran (1595)

Emperor. Thus the whole of Baluchistan and Makran became a part of the empire.

The road to Qandahar had now been opened both from the north as well as from the south. But it occupied such a strategic importance that the Shah of Persia could not easily relax his hold over it. Among the Timurid rulers of India it was Babar who had first occupied Qandahar. He was a contemporary of Shah Ismail Safawi of Persia and as related elsewhere had acknowledged his suzerainty in order to secure control over Samarqand. Qandahar was occupied for over ten years after that. But then Babar had to assuage the feelings of the Shah by addressing to him a very conciliatory letter. Humayun in his turn accepted the suzerainty of Shah Tahmasp in order to secure his assistance against Kamran and in return gave his word to hand over Qandahar to him. Humayun, however, did not keep his word but tried to conciliate the Shah by making excuses and appointing a Persian Shia as its governor. In 1556 after Humayun's death the Shah seized Qandahar by force (1558) and appointed Sultan Husain Mirza and his son Muzaffar Husain Mirza to hold it on his behalf.

The trend of Akbar's conquests inevitably showed that his next blow would be directed against Qandahar. But he was lucky to gain it without fighting because Muzaffar Husain Mirza the then governor was unable to meet Uzbeg attacks single-handed and the Shah neglected to send him reinforcements. He negotiated a surrender to Akbar on advantageous terms and Shah Beg was deputed to take charge of the fort in 1595. This completed Akbar's wars on the frontier to give his empire a rational frontier.

After the death of Akbar, Shah Abbas Safawi (1587-1629) was intent on recovering Qandahar. In 1606 at the time of Khusrau's revolt against his father Jahangir, Shah Abbas led an attack on Turkey leaving secret instructions to his agents on the Qandahar border to seize the fort by force. Shah Beg made a valiant resistance while Jahangir rushed reinforcements under Mirza Ghazi, the son of Jani Beg. Consequently, the siege failed and the Persians returned discomfited.

Shah Abbas then addressed a letter to Jahangir on his return from Turkey expressing regret for the unauthorised attack on Qandahar by frontier officers. He further asserted that he had ordered cessation of hostilities as soon as he had heard of them and was, therefore, hopeful that the Emperor would not give room to misunderstanding on account of that unfortunate incident. As Jahangir had no intention of making this an excuse for a war against Persia, he accepted the explanation as genuine, but at

Relations with Persia: Shah Abbas re-occupies Qandahar (1622)

the same time took all possible steps for the defence of the fort and posted there an army of 15,000 under Mirza Ghazi Beg.

In 1611 Shah Abbas sent Yadgar Ali as an envoy to the Mughal court with numerous gifts and a letter expressive of condolences for the death of Akbar and congratulations to Jahangir on his accession to the throne. When Yadgar returned to Persia in 1613, Jahangir sent Khan-i-Alam as his envoy with return gifts of great value and a letter expressive of goodwill and amity. He was also accompanied by Bishandas the painter so that he might bring portraits of the Shah and his principal courtiers for the benefit of the Emperor. Khan-i-Alam returned in 1619. In the meantime the Shah sent Mustafa Beg in 1615 and Muhammad Riza Beg in 1616 as his agents. They brought for the Emperor and the Empress choicest gifts and letters full of love and goodwill. In 1620 came Zambal Beg, and before his return to his country the Shah seized Qandahar by force and followed it by a letter in which he tried to make out that Qandahar really belonged to Persia and Jahangir himself should have restored it; he hoped that his recent action would not lead to worsening of mutual good relations.

The last letter revealed the true character of past diplomatic correspondence. The Shah had sent his agents for political espionage and was on the look out for a suitable opportunity to attack Qandahar. The expressions of goodwill and despatch of presents were only intended to serve as a cover for his true designs. It was often rumoured that the Shah had some secret underlying motive and in 1621, while the local *faujdar* had asked for reinforcements and had hinted at the possibility of an attack. But Jahangir and Nurjahan were completely duped by superficial cordiality and neglected the defence of Qandahar which ensured the success of the Persian coup of 1622.

Jahangir was beside himself with rage at this perfidious conduct and expressed a desire to raise a large army not only for the reconquest of Qandahar but for a raid on Isfahan. But at that time, differences between Shahjahan and Nurjahan led to the former's revolt and Persian authority over Qandahar remained unchallenged.

There had been correspondence between Shahjahan and Shah Abbas even during the reign of Jahangir. On receiving Shahjahan secures the report of Jahangir's death, Shah Abbas Qandahar again sent a letter of condolence and congratulations (1638) and as an expression of his superiority offered to help him if necessary. But the Shah predeceased the return of the envoy and was succeeded by Shah Safi (1629-1642). On hearing of this Shahjahan sent a letter of congratulations to Safi and the latter did the same. The envoys bringing these letters were generously treated by both the monarchs who detained them

for a number of days at their courts.

In 1633 Shahjahan sent Safdar Khan as his envoy to the Persian court with gifts worth four lakhs of rupees. Shah Safi addressed Shahjahan as 'Uncle' and on that account or on account of a superiority complex Shahjahan addressed to the Shah in each of his letters some words of advice, and in his first letter even offered his help probably as a tit for tat to the letter of Shah Abbas. Shah Safi was occupied in numerous battles against the Turks and the Uzbeks; this, Safdar Khan promptly reported, home with all the difficulties and preoccupations facing the Shah. In the meantime Ali Mardan the Governor of Qandahar became suspect in the eyes of the Shah and an army was sent to relieve him of his duties and despatch him to the court. In sheer self-defence, Ali Mardan followed the example of Muzaffar Husain Mirza and simultaneously invited the Mughal agents at Kabul, Ghazni and Multan to occupy the fort. He also sent a similar letter to Shahjahan. Shahjahan ordered Saeed Khan the governor of Kabul to occupy Qandahar and who after doing so drove back the Persian army. Thus after a lapse of sixteen years, Qandahar once more passed into the hands of the Mughals. Shahjahan expressed regrets for the incident but argued that as the fort really belonged to his dynasty, he hoped that mutual cordial relations between the Shah and the Emperor would remain unaffected.

Shah Safi did not maltreat the envoy but as Safdar Khan reported on his return, he had not forgotten the loss of Qandahar. For some time his numerous enemies gave him no respite. But as soon as he got a little breathing time he started preparations for an attack but fortunately for Shahjahan he died in 1642 in the midst of these preparations, and his successor Shah Abbas II was too young to do anything. Consequently, for the present, nothing was done by the Persians for the recovery of Qandahar.

During the minority of Shah Abbas, the nobles began to quarrel for securing their own selfish ends. Hence for a number of years Shahjahan had no cause for worry from that quarter. At the time of his expedition to Balkh he sent a messenger to the Shah to ensure his neutrality and when victory had been secured he sent its information to him through a messenger and offered him much *goody goody* advice.

Shah Abbas took the reins of office in his own hands in 1648 and having concluded treaties of peace with the Sultan of Turkey and the Uzbeks, he started preparations for an attack on Qandahar. In the meantime, he learnt of the failure of Shahjahan in Balkh. He exploited the opportunity and addressed a letter to Shahjahan applauding his conduct in restoring Balkh to Nazr Muhammad and exhorted him to surrender Qandahar likewise to its rightful owner, the Shah. No sooner

had he received Shahjahan's repudiation of his claim, the army which he had already mobilised for the purpose was ordered to march on Qandahar, and having captured the fort in February 1649, he wrote to Shahjahan justifying Persian claims over it.

Shahjahan was mightily offended at this proceeding and not only refused to receive the envoy but sent him an oral communication that he would reconquer Qandahar by force. But the repeated attempts of 1649, 1652 and 1653 proved unavailing and the Emperor suffered great mortification. The first two expeditions were led by Aurangzeb and Sadullah Khan. They ravaged the surrounding districts, prevented Persian reinforcements reaching the fort and secured some military success as well. But they could not recapture the fort. The Persian generals Mihtar Khan and Autar Khan continued the struggle valiantly with great self-confidence and effectively used their superior artillery to prevent the Moghuls from approaching the walls of the fort. When Aurangzeb offered the bait of high office and a rich prize, Autar Khan sent back the insulting reply that if the Prince found it too humiliating to return discomfited to India, he could emulate the example of his great great-grandfather Humayun and seek shelter in Persia. Just as Shah Tahmasp had allowed Humayun a place among his servants, the present Shah also would be magnanimous enough to grant protection to him. Thus to the ignominy of defeat was added the poignancy of an insult.

When the Prince reported failure to his father, the latter lost all balance of mind and greeted him with bitter irony and sarcasm. Aurangzeb sought permission to be allowed another chance, but Shahjahan made answer that no intelligent man gives a second trial to one who has failed once. This brought the bitter reply that the Emperor might then try those who had not been tried so far. Shahjahan then deputed Dara to lead the third expedition in 1653 and spared no efforts to make it a success. But the result was the same. These failures proved a deadly blow to the hauteur of Shahjahan, the pride of Dara and the dignity of the empire. Never again was the Emperor of Delhi to be the master of Qandahar. The expeditions proved very costly failures involving a loss of 12 crores of rupees and thousands of lives. The letter that Shah Abbas wrote to Aurangzeb at the time of his accession contained a veiled threat to invade India. This could have been an indirect result of failures at Qandahar.

The letter of Shah Abbas to Aurangzeb was intended to intimidate and to annoy. But he had no desire to invade the country

Character of	in fact. The relations between India and
Indo-Persian Diplo-	Persia hinged on the fate of Qandahar. Each
matic Relations	party asserted an exclusive claim over it. The

Persians always captured it by force and lost it by treachery of

their local officers. This showed that their capacity to acquire and retain control over it was far greater than that of the Indian monarch. This difference essentially lay in the superiority of the Persian artillery. Another notable feature is, that the object of diplomatic correspondence was neither promotion of friendship nor the ironing out of differences by peaceful negotiation and each party vaunted its successes to assert its superiority by demanding as it were, the surrender of the fort to itself. The envoys were more or less employed as spies. It is, therefore, strange that the Indian rulers remained alert and watchful for some years after securing Qandahar and then lapsed into such negligence that the Persians had no difficulty in acquiring it by force. Even when they were warned of the Persian invasion, they failed to send timely reinforcements, and never succeeded in recapturing it by a powerful counter-attack. Hence no matter who had a better theoretical claim to it, it was the Persians who displayed greater capacity to hold it and it finally passed into their permanent control.

After the conquest of Kabul, Babar had occupied Badakhshan as well and, in 1520 appointed Humayun as its governor who retained this office right upto 1529. On Relation with balkh and badakhshan Under Humayun's disinclination to return to Badakhshan, Babar offered it to Sulaiman. In the reign of Humayun, Sulaiman acted as an independent sovereign and all Humayun's efforts to subjugate him proved abortive. On Humayun's death, Sulaiman began to look upon himself as the head of the Timurid princes and tried to assert his supremacy over Kabul as has been related earlier in this chapter.

Sulaiman had the misfortune of having a long life so that his own kinsmen tired of waiting for his death, became hostile to him, till his grandson Mirza Shah Uzbeks seize Badakhshan (1584) Rukh decided to depose him by force. He defeated his grand-father and the latter fled to Akbar for help and protection. After some time, Sulaiman recovered the throne but the younger element was unwilling to tolerate the greedy old man any longer. Hence he suffered a second deposition. This time, he fled to Abdullah Khan Uzbek and sought his assistance. The latter accompanied him at the head of an army and occupied the whole of Badakhshan in 1584, and setting aside both the grandfather and the grandson, he assumed sovereignty himself.

Akbar had long cherished the hope to seize Badakhshan himself, making it the base of operations for the conquest of Bokhara and Samargand. So it was, that whenever he found an opportunity he tried to seize it by the forelock. In 1575-1576 he started raising an army in the Punjab for a successful intervention in the quarrel between Sulaiman

Akbar and Abdullah Khan Uzbek (1571-1598)

and Shah Rukh. But the rebellion of Daud detained him in India and the scheme of foreign conquest had to be postponed. When a second opening came, Abdullah Khan forestalled him. Akbar now had to give up not only the thought of foreign conquest, but had also to provide for the safety of Kabul against possible Uzbek incursion. But Akbar was relieved of this worry when Abdullah died in 1598.

Abdullah Khan was the first to contact Akbar and that was in 1571, much before he came to Badakhshan. Akbar received the Uzbek envoy graciously and treated him with appropriate diplomatic decorum. But on Abdullah Khan's occupation of Badakhshan, his first reaction was of anxiety and fear. Hence, he sent Man Singh and Bhagwan Das to Kabul and increased the strength of the garrison there. He also took Shah Rukh under his protection and promised to help restore him in Badakhshan. During 1585-1586, by successful wars against the Afghans and the Kashmiris, he extended the sphere of his authority and in 1586 addressed a letter to Abdullah Khan Uzbek recounting his successes and plans. He had hoped that he would impress Abdullah with his great might and thus deter him from infringing his territory. But this gave Abdullah the opposite impression that the Emperor was probably preparing the ground for an invasion of Badakhshan. Hence in 1589, he sent an envoy to the Mughal court in order to ascertain the real intentions of the Emperor. That same year Akbar paid a visit to Kashmir and Kabul but on his return from there, instead of halting on the *Indus*, he went forward to Lahore and undertook the conquests of Sindh and Orissa, and Abdullah Khan heaved a sigh of relief. Thus though both parties suspected the other of aggressive intentions, each was shy of attacking the other.

After the death of Abdullah Khan, Akbar once more thought of reconquering his ancestral dominion in central Asia. Abul Fazl supported the move and proposed that Prince Salim be entrusted with the task. But the Prince did not welcome the proposal. Hence, for the time being, Akbar gave up the idea once again. Then the wars in the Deccan and the revolt of Salim accounted for the rest of his life and he could not put into execution the plan of Central Asian conquests.

After the accession of Jahangir to the throne in 1605, relations with Central Asian power were on the whole cordial and friendly.

Jahangir's relations
with Imam Quli
and Nazr Muham-
mad

His reign witnessed the rise to power of a new dynasty called the Astrakhans who were descended from Changez. In 1611, Imam Quli became the ruler of Samarqand and appointed his younger brother Nazr Muhammad as the ruler of Balkh. Imam Quli was a man of pacific intentions and he established friendly diplomatic relations with Jahangir. In 1622 after the Persian occupation of Qandahar,

Imam Quli sent Khwaja Abdur Rahim to Jahangir charged with a message of cooperation in the war against the Persians. He proposed that the Emperor should depute his son Shahjahan as the leader of the expedition and promised to collaborate with him not only in the recovery of Qandahar but also seizing and partitioning Khorasan between them. Encouraged by this message, Jahangir planned to send his armies as far as Isfahan but the revolt of Shahjahan dashed all his hopes to the ground.

When during the last years of Jahangir, India was torn by dissensions centring round the problem of succession, Nazr Muhammad was tempted to take advantage of this by trying to seize Kabul territory although Shahjahan and Nazr Muhammad his elder brother had advised him not to do so. Nazr Muhammad gained nothing by the move but on the contrary, on the arrival of reinforcements from India his position became extremely precarious and he was fortunate in effecting his return to his own country.

Shahjahan had already ascended the throne when the invasion took place. He sent prompt reinforcements and on Nazr Muhammad's withdrawal he addressed a letter to Imam Quli in November 1628 in which he spoke of the arrival and subsequent death of the Astrakhani envoy Abdur Rahim and referred to the recent indiscretion of Nazr Muhammad but assured him of his desire to continue former cordial relations with him. The effect of this was that Imam Quli condemned the act of Nazr Muhammad and his respect for Shahjahan was considerably enhanced. Also, instead of sending any diplomatic mission to Nazr Muhammad, Shahjahan seized Bamiyan as a proof of his superior might.

Three years later, Nazr Muhammad sent an envoy to the Mughal court and expressed regrets for his former act of aggression. After that upto 1639, there was nothing worthy of notice. Elated by the occupation of Qandahar and the successful conclusion of the Deccan campaign, Shahjahan went to Kabul in 1639 and began to press on the frontiers of Badakhshan. But when Imam Quli and Nazr Muhammad sent envoys proposing joint invasion of Khorasan, Shahjahan restrained his aggressive designs and sent reassuring letters to the two brothers.

Some time after this Imam Quli went blind and in 1641 Nazr Muhammad seized his territory. Imam Quli proceeded to Mecca via Persia and passed away at Madina. Nazr Muhammad's efforts at consolidation of his authority in the newly acquired territory proved so harsh that opposition started and his own son Abdul Aziz was chosen the Khan and Nazr Muhammad was driven out. The rebels invaded Balkh as well. This alarmed Nazr Muhammad so much that he appealed to Shahjahan for help. Shahjahan was only too eager to respond and promptly sent Prince Murad at the head of a large army accompanied by some of

the ablest and most experienced *amirs* of the empire. This army first occupied Badakhshan and having restored order there proceeded to Balkh. Nazr Muhammad was so unnerved by the size and movements of the Mughal army that he fled to Persia though Murad tried to prevent his flight but to no purpose. The effect of this, however, was that Balkh also passed under the control of the Indian army.

Shahjahan was extremely delighted at the despatches of victory and began to dream of realizing what even Babar and Akbar had failed to achieve. He already imagined the imperial flag fluttering over Samarqand and Bokhara. But this was nothing short of mere moonshine. Badakhshan had been so thoroughly permeated by Uzbek and Astrakhanid influence that counter-attacking bands soon organised themselves and started an offensive against the Indian invaders. Moreover, the Indian generals found the land too inhospitable and pined for home in-so-far that Murad became so restless that he returned to India even against the wishes of the Emperor. During his absence, the whole land was divided into four military commands, each under a senior nobleman but there was no Central Command to coordinate and organise their efforts from above. This made the task of the enemy easier and the Uzbek attacks increased in violence and frequency, so that supplies began to run short. Shahjahan grasping the situation deputed Aurangzeb to retrieve the lost ground. (1647). He enforced order and discipline in the ranks of the army and beat back repeated Uzbek counter-attacks. Abdul Aziz and his younger brother Subhan Quli led an army of 1,20,000 soldiers against the Prince but he was defeated. He, however, realized the futility of attempting to rule over the land in the teeth of determined universal opposition. He reported the situation to Shahjahan who found all his fond hopes dashed to the ground. But he was helpless. He, therefore, advised Aurangzeb that Nazr Muhammad's appeal for mercy be made the basis for restoration of the land to him on condition of vassalage to the Mughal Emperor. Aurangzeb, accordingly restored the government to Nazr Muhammad and returned to India.

This wild adventure cost the Indian exchequer a sum of two crores and the army lost over 5000 veterans without the gain of even an inch of territory. It exposed the hollowness of Shahjahan's power so that the Shah of Persia had no hesitation in attacking Qandahar the very next year and capturing it within less than two months. It also rang the finale to friendly relations between the government of India and Badakhshan.

The policy initiated by Akbar on the north-western frontier secured to the empire Kashmir, Kabul, Sindh, Baluchistan and Makran. He had acquired Qandahar and had made such arrangements for its defence that the Shah's effort at reconquest in 1606 was easily beaten back. But his successors were not so alert and

A resume of the
North-Western
Frontier Policy

watchful as himself so that the Persians captured it a second time in 1622 and finally in 1649. He had a desire to invade Badakhshan but he took no hasty steps. His grandson Shahjahan possessed neither such restraint nor the imagination to camouflage his defeat by tacitly writing to Nazr Muhammad in Persia that he was sorry he had taken unnecessary fright as he had instructed his generals to stay in Badakhshan only as long as they were needed. This could have won for him the respect of the people and provided an excuse for withdrawal without loss of face. He could then even flaunt his sense of justice and generosity in foreign lands. But instead, he covered himself with shame and ignominy. In the tribal region also, Akbar was more successful than those who followed him. It would thus appear that while Akbar's policy proved the most successful and beneficial to the empire, that of Shahjahan proved the most ruinous and the most expensive.

Further Readings.

1. Howorth—*History of the Mongols*.
2. Sykes—*History of Persia*.
3. Vambéry—*History of Bokhara*.
4. Smith—*Akbar the Great Moghul*, Chapters VII and IX.
5. Beni Prasad—*Jahangir*, Chapters VII and XVI.
6. Saksena—*Shahjahan*, Chapters VIII and IX.
7. Faruqi—*Aurangzeb*, Chapters I and XI.
8. Sarkar—*A Short History of Aurangzeb*, Chapter I.
9. Qanungo—*Dara Shukoh*, Chapter IV.

(See also the list at the end of Chapter V).

CHAPTER X

CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN—LOCAL MUSLIM DYNASTIES ENDED

At the beginning of the 16th century, there were seven principal states in the Deccan—Khandesh, Berar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkunda, Bidar and Vijayanagar.

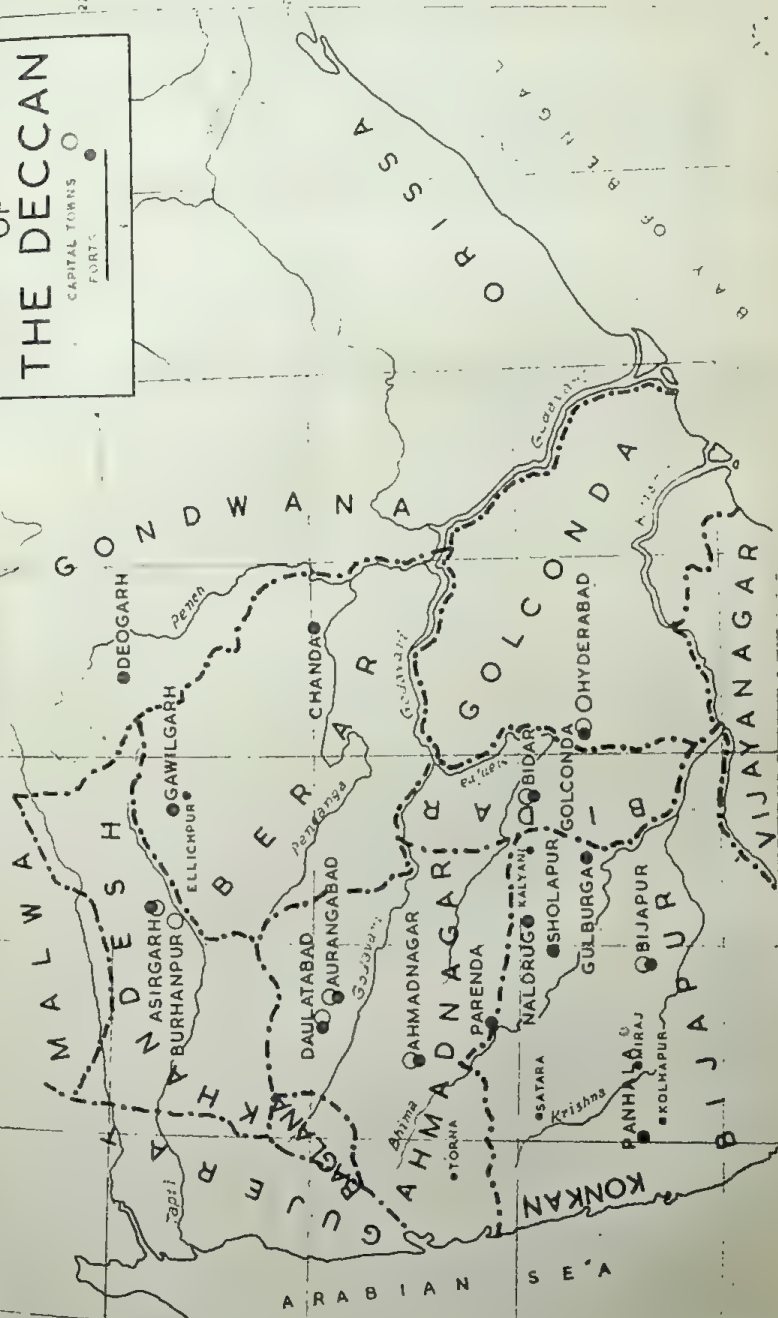
States of the Deccan Among these Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Vijayanagar were relatively more powerful, while among these latter Vijayanagar was the strongest and the most prosperous. But within ten years of Akbar's accession, Vijayanagar suffered such devastation after its defeat at Talikota that it could never regain its former glory. Later Berar and Bidar were eliminated, Ahmadnagar seizing the first and Bijapur, the other. Thus at the time of Akbar's invasion of the Deccan there were only four states, each ruled by a Muslim dynasty. These were conquered after a struggle of about a hundred years and the supremacy of the Mughal sovereign was established throughout the peninsula.

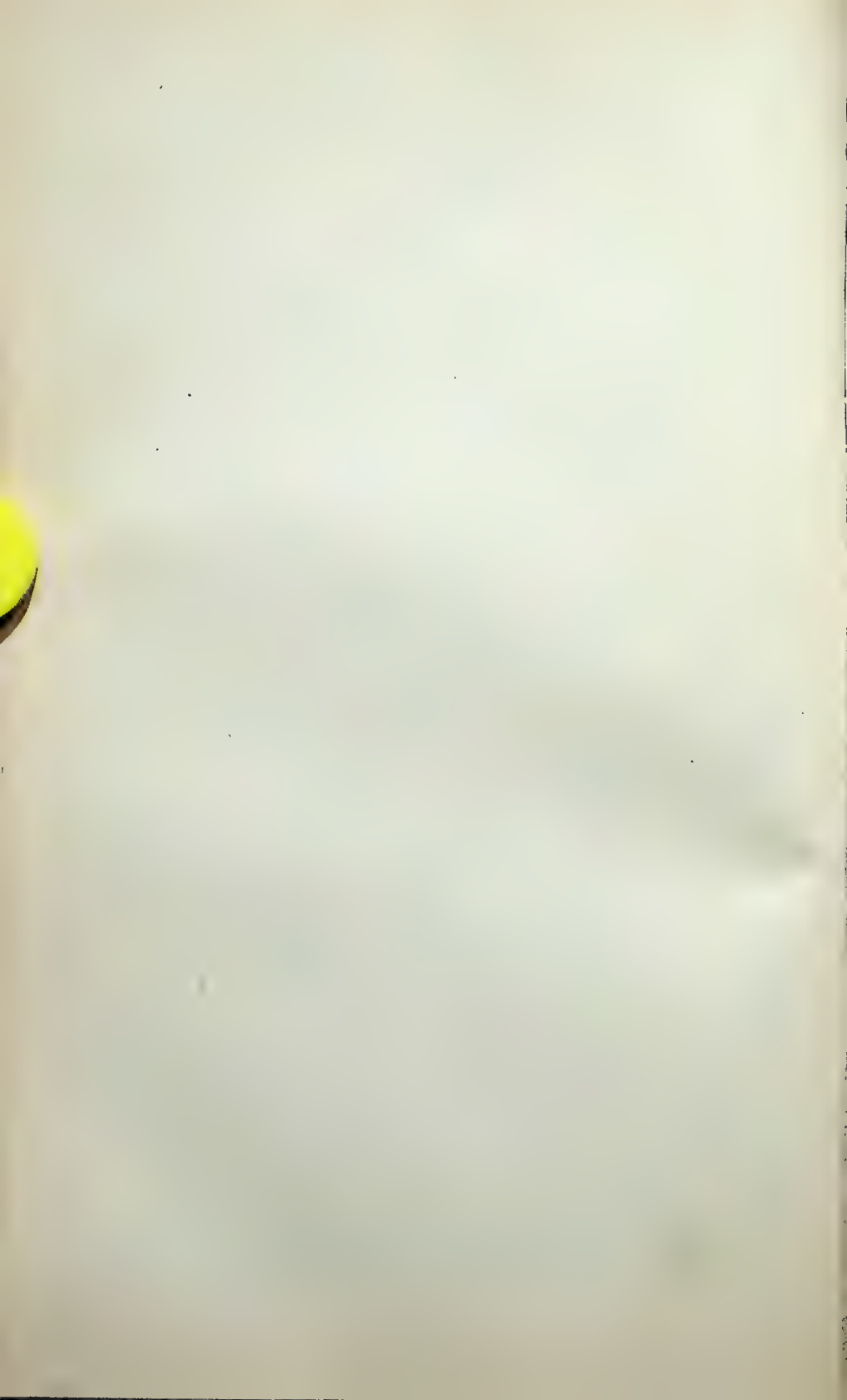
The rebels against Sultan Muhammad Shah I, the second ruler of the Bahmanid dynasty, who sought Firuz Tughluq's intervention included one Malik Ahmad. Failing to withstand the onslaught of his master, he fled north and carved out an independent kingdom for himself in the region lying between the Narbada and the Tapti. But he and his successors continued to call themselves 'Khan' rather than 'Shah'. Hence the land under them came to be known as 'Khandesh' (*i.e.* the land of the Khans). Malik Ahmad traced his genealogy to the second Caliph Umar-al-Faruq and so his dynasty came to be known as the Faruqi dynasty. The rulers of this dynasty held sway for over 200 years, from the closing decades of the 14th century to the end of the 16th century and, in this period they exercised considerable influence on the politics of neighbouring kingdoms.

Malik Ahmad died in 1399 and his sons divided the kingdom between them. Nasir secured the eastern and Hasan got the western part. But Nasir soon outshone his brother and founded the town of Burhanpur (1400). He next seized the fort of Asirgarh which belonged to a Hindu Raja. Then, he entered into a matrimonial alliance with Sultan Hushang of Malwa to whom he married his sister. Then with Hushang's assistance, he deprived Hasan in 1417 of all that he held and reunified the two sections of Khandesh. Ahmad Shah, the ruler of Gujerat, first intervened on behalf of Hasan but later recognized Nasir as the

KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN

CAPITAL TOWNS
FORTS





ruler of the whole of Khandesh to detach him from the side of Malwa. Nasir did not reciprocate this move. Instead, he refused to become a camp-follower of Gujerat and strengthened his position by composing his differences with the Bahmanids and offered his daughter in marriage to Prince Alauddin Ahmad. But when Alauddin after his accession, started neglecting Nasir's daughter, the offended father started a war against him and lost his life in 1435. He was succeeded by Adil Khan I (1435-1441), Mubarak Khan (1441-1457) and Adil Khan II (1457-1501).

Adil Khan II is regarded as one of the greatest rulers of this dynasty. He extended his sway over Gondwana and Jharkhand and repudiated his subservience to Gujerat. But he could not maintain this position and on the insistence of the Sultan of Gujerat had to nominate Alam Khan, a descendant of Nasir's brother Hasan and, son of the Sultan's daughter as his successor. When Alam Khan became the ruler of Khandesh he assumed the style of Adil Khan III and strengthened the ties of subservient alliance with the ruler of Gujerat.

Miran Muhammad I, the son and successor of Adil Khan III, was the first man to call himself Shah. In 1528, Bahadur Shah offered him protection in course of a war against the ruler of Ahmadnagar and conferred on him the title of 'Shah'. The acceptance of this title confirmed his vassalage to the house of Gujerat.

The Timurids of the north came into contact with the Faruqis during the reign of Muhammad Shah I. The latter had accompanied Bahadur Shah during his Mewar campaign, so that, when Humayun marched forward to intercept Bahadur at Mandisor, Muhammad Shah was also present in the Gujerat camp and took part in the battles of Mandisor and Mandu. When Humayun had annexed Gujerat, he invaded Khandesh at the head of a plundering army as a reprisal for the Sultan's conduct and demanded his submission. Muhammad Shah meekly submitted and implored forgiveness. But, at the same time, he also exhorted the rulers of Bijapur, Golkunda and Berar to establish a joint front of Deccan Sultans against Humayun. Humayun was satisfied by his humility and returned to his base, but, before the settlement of Gujerat and Malwa had been concluded, he had to return to Agra. This relieved the Faruqis of all further worry on his account.

After Humayun's return to Agra, Bahadur Shah lost his life in 1537 and Miran Muhammad Shah was chosen to succeed him, but he died on the way to Gujerat. He was followed on the throne of Khandesh by Mubarak Shah II (1537-1566) who was drawn into contact with Emperor Akbar after the latter's conquest of Malwa, when Baz Bahadur sought shelter with the ruler of Khandesh. Pir Muhammad had then invaded Khandesh and

gone as far as Burhanpur and Asirgarh, putting thousands of Faruqi subjects to the sword. This was a mere raid and devoid of any permanent results. But in 1561, after suppressing the revolt of Abdullah Khan Uzbek, Akbar stayed on at Mandu and demanded the hand of Mubarak Shah's daughter as a proof of his loyalty and goodwill. This was promptly complied, and so, for the time being Khandesh escaped an invasion by the Mughal army.

But Akbar aspired to bring the whole of India under his sway. Besides, he also knew, that in the first half of the 14th century Deccan had formed a part of the Sultanate of Delhi. This naturally made him anxious to repeat the experiment afresh. He had also learnt that the Sultans of the Deccan states had weakened themselves by their mutual wars and their conquest would present no serious difficulties. Further, success against them would not only enhance the prestige of the Emperor but would also enormously augment his financial resources by the acquisition of their hoarded treasures. Also, for the expulsion of the Europeans annexation of the Deccan was essential. Hence, in 1577, he started exerting pressure on Raja Ali Khan the ruler of Khandesh. Raja Ali wanted to resist the advance of the Emperor south of the *Narbada* by organising a defensive pact of the states of the Deccan. But, he was also conscious of the utter impossibility of mobilising the military resources of the Deccan under a single leader. Even if such a course were possible, the worst sufferers would have been his own people. Hence he acknowledged the supremacy of the Emperor without fighting and as long as he lived he never flouted his authority. Not only that, he lost his life fighting for him.

The other Muslim state of the south with which Akbar came into intimate contact was Ahmadnagar. The Nizamshahi The Nizam Shahs dynasty of Ahmadnagar was founded by of Ahmadnagar Ahmad Niza-ul-mulk in 1490. He was descended (1490—1636) from a local Brahmin family and occupied an important place among the Deccani nobles of the Bahmani kingdom. When the power of the Bahmanids declined, he declared his independence. The circumstances that gave birth to the state of Ahmadnagar left little scope for peaceful development. Nor did the rulers of Ahmadnagar do anything to put an end to the general atmosphere of disorder and anarchy, war and revolution. The law of the jungle was the rule in the then political condition of the south and each state was constantly fidgeting to swallow up its weaker neighbour. The rulers of Ahmadnagar generally held their own in contest with all their neighbours, but they had to bow before the superior might of the house of Gujerat.

The contemporary of the second Nizamshahi ruler Burhan was Bahadur Shah. The latter invaded Ahmadnagar twice

Burhan's appeal to Bahar and Humayun for help between 1528-1539. Burhan had then appealed to Babar and Humayun for help, but they were so engrossed in their own problems that they could neither go to the south to assist Burhan nor could they relieve the pressure on him by invading Gujerat. Consequently, Burhan Nizamshah was forced to include the name of Bahadur Shah in the *Khutba*. But he never became a reconciled vassal and continued to nurse ill-will towards him. So that instead of honouring his obligation to march to the assistance of Bahadur Shah in his war against Humayun he entered into secret correspondence with the latter to provoke his invasion of Gujerat.

Humayun could not take advantage of these letters. But when his son Akbar annexed Gujerat in 1572, he sent Mir Mohsin Akbar claims suzerainty over Nizam Shah Razi to the contemporary Nizamshahi ruler Murtaza to assert his sovereignty over him as the master of Gujerat. Murtaza Nizam Shah received the envoy with great honour and conciliated the Emperor by sending him valuable presents. But as Murtaza was a great tyrant, dissensions and disorders within the kingdom increased while he retaliated by punishment on mere suspicion or even trumped up charges. He even threw into prison his own brother Burhan. Later Burhan to gain his freedom and possibly the throne, was involved in a conspiracy but the plan miscarried and Burhan fled for safety to the Adilshahi court of Bijapur (1579). But when the Adilshah did not evince much interest in his plans, he fled to Akbar. Other refugees from Ahmadnagar also followed suit.

Akbar had already made up his mind to annex the Deccan. When he heard of the chronic disorders of the Ahmadnagar kingdom, he felt it was divine dispensation that he should march into that territory to ensure peace and good government to its people. He, therefore, decided to intervene on behalf of Burhan. But his attention was soon diverted by troubles on the north-western frontier, so that the Deccan adventure had to be postponed. By the time the Emperor had some leisure to attend to affairs in the Deccan, many changes had taken place in Ahmadnagar. Murtaza was dead and his son Husain was murdered. The throne was offered to Burhan's son Ismail. Burhan naturally thought that that was the right moment to return home and sought Akbar's leave to depart. The Emperor was willing to lend him some troops as well. But Burhan elected to go alone because acceptance of Mughal military aid might possibly have made him a Mughal vassal and could have alienated the sympathies of some of his own supporters. The Emperor, however, hoped that Burhan would acknowledge his suzerainty out of a sense of gratitude towards

him. But when he did not do so, Akbar sent him a diplomatic mission under Aminuddin to press for it.

Akbar thought that his conquest of Malwa, Gujerat, Orissa and Gondwana, and the acceptance of his suzerainty by Raja Ali

Khan of Khandesh would induce other Deccani rulers to submit to him. Burhan of Ahmadnagar had been at his court and had received favours and could, therefore, be induced to toe the line of Raja Ali. Similarly, Bijapur and Golkunda would be forced in the circumstances to fall in line with them. With these expectations, the Emperor sent four envoys to the four kingdoms of the Deccan—Faizi to Khandesh, Aminuddin to Ahmadnagar, Mir Muhammad Amin to Bijapur and Mir Munir or Mir Mirza to Golkunda. On concluding his mission in Khandesh, Faizi went to Ahmadnagar but to no purpose. Raja Ali Khan also advised Burhan to conciliate the Emperor. But he neither received the envoys well nor did he send a suitable reply nor acceptable presents. The rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda on the other hand sent courteous replies and rich presents. When the various missions returned to court and submitted their reports, the Emperor was highly incensed at the conduct of Burhan-ul-mulk and decided to invade his kingdom in vindication of his honour.

The Emperor decided to take immediate action. So he deputed Murad to proceed to Malwa as its governor and make the necessary preparations for war. But he showed no enthusiasm for the expedition.

Hence Daniyal accompanied by Khan-i-Khanan Abdur Rahim, was directed to move towards the south. Murad felt slighted by this supersession and prayed for permission to lead the expedition himself. Hence Daniyal was recalled and Khan-i-Khanan was directed to co-operate with him. Raja Ali Khan was also alerted to remain in readiness for joining the Prince; though as a personal friend of Burhan he might have found it hard to fight against him. But the turn of events in Ahmadnagar solved all Mughal difficulties.

The Nizamshahi court was sharply divided into two camps—the Deccanis and the Abyssinians. Burhan II favoured the latter, which led to a conspiracy to depose him.

But he died in April 1595 and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim who was killed in a war against Bijapur. His death was followed by great dissensions and four rival candidates were set up for the throne. Chand Bibi, a sister of Burhan and the widow of Ali Adilshah of Bijapur held the fort and district of Ahmadnagar. She placed Ibrahim's infant son Bahadur on the throne while Ikhlas Khan and his Abyssinian allies who controlled the Daulatabad region set up Moti Shah, a boy of an obscure origin as their candidate. The main group of Abyssinian nobles pressed the claims of the

aged Prince Ali, son of Burhan I while Miyan Manjhu, the leader of the Deccani nobles supported Ahmad, alleged to be a grandson of Burhan I. These groups in turn sought assistance from the Adilshah who advised them to compose their differences and set up an agreed candidate.

Miyan Manjhu now turned towards Murad and the Khan-i-Khanan. They had, already, orders for invasion, and Murad from Gujerat and the Khan-i-Khanan from Ahmadnagar 1595-1596 Malwa immediately invaded Ahmadnagar in response to Manjhu's appeal for help.

Raja Ali Khan also accompanied the imperialists and played an important role in subsequent events. The imperial army dashed on to Ahmadnagar and laid siege to it. Chand Bibi put up a gallant resistance. Her farsightedness, courage, resourcefulness and astute diplomacy made the surrender of the fort a distant possibility. Murad and Abdur Rahim started mutual recriminations while Raja Ali Khan wanted to save Ahmadnagar's integrity and yet to satisfy the Emperor. He exhorted the Nizamshahi nobles to sink their differences and to secure the support of Bijapur and Golkunda, so that, the Emperor might be induced to stop fighting on reasonable terms. Finally, a treaty was signed in 1596 and fighting came to an end.

Bahadur, the grandson of Burhan II was accepted as the ruler of Ahmadnagar under the suzerainty of the Emperor and ceded the province of Berar to him together with elephants, precious jewels and other rich presents. Thus, the Emperor gained both prestige and territory. But Abul Fazl has strongly criticised the conclusion of peace on these terms. He says, that a little more patience and courage would have secured the fall of Ahmadnagar and with it the end of the Nizamshahs. But, we must not lose sight of the fact that while Murad and Abdur Rahim found it difficult to act in unison, the dynamic leadership of Chand Bibi could have lead to the formation of a joint front not only of the Nizamshahi nobles, but also of the Deccan states, in which case it may not have been possible to secure even what had been obtained.

Chand Bibi on her part regretted the necessity of submitting to terms dishonourable to Ahmadnagar. But she looked upon it as a mere truce. As soon as her diplomacy against Ahmadnagar 1597-1600 had succeeded in evolving a united front of the Deccan states and her appeal to their sense of honour and patriotism had induced the internal leaders to rally round a single sovereign, the repudiation of the treaty and reconquest of the lost territory would take no time. She had submitted in 1596 only to avoid a total extinction of the kingdom. Thus both parties were dissatisfied with the provisions of the treaty and hostilities started again the very next year.

Chand Bibi during this period failed to secure internal cohesion and mutual wrangles continued. Bijapur and Golkunda.

were convinced that it was in their own interest to defend Ahmadnagar. Bijapur, therefore, lent Chand Bibi the use of some of her troops and she, with their aid, was partly able to overcome disaffected elements. But before she had concluded this work, war started again. Each party charged the other with breach of terms, but the real cause for the revival of the war was the ambitions of Akbar and the incurable political tensions in Ahmadnagar.

This time the war lasted till 1600. In 1597, the Khan-i-Khanan defeated the combined armies of Bijapur and Golkunda in the battle of Sonpat. Raja Ali fighting at the head of 30 officers and 500 horsemen lost his life in this battle. This had an adverse effect on the position of the Emperor; for Raja Ali's successor Miran Bahadur Shah aligned himself with the Deccan states and regarded Mughal expansion in the south as detrimental to his own security. Besides, Murad and Abdur Rahim failed to pull on well together, consequently, the war did not progress well for the Emperor. They were, therefore, removed from the Deccan command and Mirza Shah Rukh was sent as the commander-in-chief. When he too failed to cut much ice, Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan was sent again as deputy to Prince Daniyal who was officially appointed the chief commander. The Emperor, also, proceeded to the Deccan and the siege of Ahmadnagar was vigorously pressed. Chand Bibi had simultaneously to wage a struggle against rivals at home and the enemy from the north. Hence when she found the fall of the fort imminent she proposed starting negotiations for peace. This led to a serious opposition in her own camp and she was either killed or committed suicide. With her death, all resistance collapsed and in 1600, the fort of Ahmadnagar fell to the Emperor. Bahadur along with members of his family was sent away to Gwalior and spent the rest of his life there. If Akbar had been free to continue the struggle a little longer, the Nizamshahi kingdom might have ended just then. But the revolt in Khandesh, saved it from that evil fate for the time being.

After Raja Ali Khan's death at Sonpat, his son Miran Bahadur succeeded to the throne. His accession marked a change in the policy of Khandesh. The rulers of the Deccan had grown conscious of the danger facing them and of the need to save Ahmadnagar for the preservation of their own integrity. Hence, Chand Bibi's diplomacy had begun to bear fruit and the plan for making a united effort to drive out the Mughal invaders was gaining momentum. Miran Bahadur welcomed such a move though he was not in a position immediately to stand up against the Emperor. The armies from the north had to pass through his territory via Burhanpur and Asirgarh which caused inconvenience to his subjects. Then, there was the danger of the Emperor demanding surrender of Burhanpur and Asirgarh for the safety of his

Disaffection in
Khandesh

communications with Ahmadnagar, and with the loss of which a truncated Khandesh could hardly survive as an autonomous unit. Hence the situation arising out of Akbar's campaigns in the Deccan made Miran Bahadur apprehensive of his own security. He felt that he would either have to fight for the integrity of his kingdom or make a tame surrender. He thought that the united might of the Deccan states could successfully resist the onward march of Mughal imperialism, while mutual jealousies and recriminations of Mughal generals, disturbances in Bengal, Orissa and the revolt of Salim were other factors which would indirectly help the resistance movement in the Deccan. The European traders were severely hostile to the expansion of Akbar's authority and were willing to lend aid of their artillery and navy to the Deccan states in their fight against the Emperor. Moreover, the fort of Asirgarh was regarded as the most impregnable in the whole of Asia and Africa. Fitted with European artillery and stocked with adequate provisions it could defy all attempts of conquest for years together. Thus Miran Bahadur determined to fight if necessary for his rights as an autonomous chief. That is why when in 1599 Abul Fazl brought him the imperial *farman* commanding him to join the Deccan campaign personally, he flatly refused, though he promised to provide 2000 troops for the service of the Emperor. Similarly, he did not pay Prince Daniyal the usual courtesy call, when the prince, on his way to the Deccan, halted at Burhanpur.

This was in sharp contrast to the behaviour of Raja Ali Khan, and a strong authoritarian like Akbar could hardly put up with such a flagrant breach of imperial etiquette. It was dangerous to leave a man of doubtful loyalty in possession of a land lying on the route to the Deccan. It was also inconsistent with the terms of vassalage to recruit foreign troops and store up a pile of ammunition. Such undue intimacy with the Portuguese whom the Emperor wanted to expel from India was an unpardonable treason. Even then, the Emperor was willing to let Miran Bahadur continue on the throne of Khandesh if he surrendered Burhanpur and Asirgarh and broke off all contacts with the hated Portuguese. Thus, there was an air of mutual distrust on both sides which finally resulted in an open war.

The Emperor marched to the south. Burhanpur was seized and Abul Fazl was appointed governor of Khandesh which virtually meant the deposition of Miran Bahadur.

The siege of Asirgarh Sayyad Farid Bokhari and Abul Fazl were next ordered to lay siege to the fort of Asirgarh. Sayyad Farid had an audience with Miran Bahadur and tried to impress on him the wisdom of meeting the Emperor and asking for his forgiveness, pointing out the evil consequences of opposition. But this had no effect on him and the siege continued. The Emperor took all possible measures to expedite the fall of the fort. He laid mines to blow up its walls, offered rich

bribes to the leaders of the garrison and used shock tactics to intimidate Miran Bahadur. But they all proved futile. He then tried to secure more powerful cannon from the Portuguese through Xavier's mediation, but the latter excused himself by saying that his calling as a priest precluded his being a party to any such deal. Yaqut, the Abyssinian commander of the fort was a highly talented general, while the ammunition and supplies stocked in the fort would last for years. Hence the end of fighting was nowhere in sight. And yet the Emperor refused to budge an inch without capturing the fort. Just then an epidemic started inside the fort which caused a panic among the people. The cause of the epidemic is unknown although according to one source it was said to have been caused by some sort of poisonous gases.

Miran Bahadur now realized the need of ending the hostilities if an honourable way-out could be found. He, therefore, agreed to wait on the Emperor in October

The Fall of Asirgarh 1600 on assurances of personal security and (1601) freedom to return to the fort if negotiations

failed. The Portuguese and the Abyssinians opposed the move but he overruled them. Akbar received him well but forced him to write to the commandant to surrender the fort to the imperial agents. According to the previous instructions of Miran Bahadur himself, the Commandant refused to do so and sent his son to protest to the Emperor against breach of faith. The Emperor ordered the execution of that impudent man and his father committed suicide when he failed to persuade any of the royal princes to ascend the throne and assume leadership. This led to great disorders within the fort. Many people were now willing to desert to the Emperor and when they received profuse promises of gold and high office, the fort surrendered in January 1601. The fort was occupied, Khandesh was annexed and Miran Bahadur and his people were pensioned off and confined in strong forts. Miran Bahadur himself was sent to Gwalior and an annual allowance of 4000 *asharfis* (gold pieces) was fixed on him. Thus the Faruqi dynasty of Khandesh came to an end.

Smith has cast serious aspersions on the actions of Akbar, preceding the fall of Asirgarh. Other authors have also condemned the detention of Miran Bahadur, execution of the son of Yaqut and lavish use of corruption to win over the guardians of the fort. But the conduct of Akbar was not as reprehensible as it had been made out. Miran Bahadur had been guilty of rebellion and defiance of imperial authority. His guilty conscience had kept him away from the imperial presence. It was highly improper on his part to leave the fort of Asirgarh in the hands of the Abyssinians and the Portuguese instead of surrendering it to the Emperor who was his legal suzerain and master. In order to ascertain as to who was the real master of the fort, it was essential to detain him in the camp, for to send him back to the fort when

his guilt was patent would have favoured only the mischievous foreigners. Thus his detention by the Emperor was neither contrary to medieval practice nor prejudicial to public interest. If the conduct of Miran Bahadur had been unimpeachable, treachery against him would have been unworthy. But treachery to disarm treason was neither immoral nor unwise. Security of the empire demanded that Asirgarh should not remain in hostile possession and when Miran Bahadur would not submit, there was no alternative but to depose him. As for bribing the enemy, the practice was neither new nor unapproved. Looking at things dispassionately, annexation by bribery should be preferable to annexation by murder on a mass scale, which war involves. Hence the conduct of the Emperor offended neither against contemporary practice nor the dictates of morality. Judged by results, the entire proceeding was wholly justified.

The result of Akbar's policy in the Deccan was that Khan-desh, Berar and Ahmadnagar with its contiguous region became a part of the empire. He also acquired a

Results of Akbar's Policy number of valuable forts so that further expansion of the empire by his successors was facilitated. The Nizamshahi kingdom had been considerably weakened but its recovery in the future was by no means ruled out. This would involve the Mughals in fresh fighting. Thus wars in the Deccan, henceforward, became the principal occupation of the Timurid sovereigns of India and they had to face numerous difficulties in course of them. Viewed in this context, expansion of the empire beyond the *Vindhyas* ultimately proved ruinous rather than beneficial to the empire.

When Akbar left for the north, he appointed Daniyal as the viceroy of the Deccan. Daniyal lacked the necessary grit and ability to organise a successful war in an unfam-

Malik Ambar's counter-offensive miliar land. He therefore spent his time in the pursuit of sensual pleasures. In the meantime, the struggle for supremacy started among the Nizamshahi nobles. Malik Ambar defeated his chief rival Malik Raju and slowly acquired control over the whole of unoccupied Ahmadnagar and placed a member of the Nizamshahi dynasty on the throne under the style of Murtaza Nizamshah II.

Taking advantage of rivalries and dissensions among the Mughal generals he planned the reconquest of the lost territory. As a prelude to this he reorganised the internal administration and revived the respect for the Nizamshahi dynasty. In infusing fresh vigour and new life into the dry bones of the dynasty he enabled it to stand up to the Mughals, is a marvel of history. Even unfriendly chroniclers have testified to his farsighted statesmanship, high administrative talents and great abilities. He was

an Abyssinian slave who by sheer dint of merit, loyalty and devotion to duty had gradually risen to the highest post in the state *viz.* that of the regent. Besides this he improved agriculture, restored order, made provision for justice and reorganised and strengthened the army.

He settled farmers in villages which had lately been deserted and assured them of protection against oppression and heavy taxation. In assessing land revenue due regard was kept of the area and the estimated yield of the field. Land revenue was fixed at two-fifth of the actual or the estimated produce and if the tenant agreed to cash commutation he was charged at the rate of $\frac{1}{3}$ only. His system, was indeed, indebted to Todar Mal's regulations, but it was technically called the *ragba* (area) and the *tankha* (cash payment) system. The older hereditary revenue officers in the village and the pargana were removed and their places were given to respectable Brahmins in each village who were enjoined to maintain law and order and to assist in the realization of Government dues. They were allowed a nominal commission on the total collection and were guaranteed certain local privileges. This arrangement made the peasantry loyal and contented, revived agriculture, while regular collection of taxes through honest agents filled the royal treasury. Assured of more or less stable finances, Ambar attended to other reforms. He improved the law and order position, put down lawlessness and made adequate provision for punishment of robbery, theft, dacoity and murder.

His military reforms were suited to the exigencies of the situation. Besides having a permanent standing Muslim army, he organised an auxiliary band of light Maratha cavalry and trained it in guerilla warfare. This force was expected to scour the whole land and acquaint itself with each nook and corner over hill and dale and be familiar with secret and unfrequented routes.

Having made these preparations he launched a counter-offensive against the Mughals. The revolt of Khusrau, the Persian attack on Qandahar and the war against Mewar had scattered the forces of the Mughal Empire. Moreover, the generals in the south were indolent and ease-loving. Malik Ambar had, therefore, little difficulty in driving them out of Ahmadnagar and Berar, and reoccupied the fort of Ahmadnagar in, 1608.

Thus, at the very beginning of his reign, Jahangir lost practically all that his father had acquired from the Nizamshahs. The whole of Jahangir's reign was spent in contending against the crafty Malik Ambar, who by a combination of diplomacy and war, kept the Emperor at bay and even mobilised the support of Adilshah of Bijapur and Qutbshah of Golkunda.

Jahangir had originally proposed to send Raja Man Singh to the South but at Khan-i-Khanan's request permitted him to go instead. The Khan-i-Khanan made frantic but ineffectual efforts to retrieve the lost ground between 1608 and 1610 and was, thereafter, replaced by Asaf Khan and Parwez. When they also failed, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi and Khan-i-Azam were tried. Then in 1611 a master plan for invasion was planned, Man Singh and Abdullah Khan starting from their bases in Khandesh and Gujerat were to converge on Ahmadnagar and by their joint efforts conquer the whole kingdom. But Abdullah Khan foolishly decided to accomplish everything by himself, with the result that his premature attack was beaten back with heavy losses and he had to fall back on Gujerat. Then Khan-i-Khanan was tried again and although he secured some success he was neither able to destroy the power of Malik Ambar nor able to secure his submission to the Emperor.

It was widely rumoured that the Khan-i-Khanan was in secret league with Ambar and had been bought off by a heavy bribe. The Khan-i-Khanan had shown some activity in the beginning to demonstrate his ability but as soon as he got his price, he began retreating. Hence, in 1616, he and Prince Parwez were recalled and Khurram was commissioned to invade the Deccan. He was accompanied by some of the best generals of the empire and was provided with 50,000 select troops. Malik Ambar now thought 'discretion the better part of valour' and, therefore, sued for terms without risking his strength against such heavy odds. He surrendered the district of Belaghat and the keys of Ahmadnagar and other forts to the Prince, while a present of 15 lakhs of rupees was sent to the Emperor on behalf of the rulers of the Deccan.

Khurram now decided to return north and the Khan-i-Khanan and Shah Nawaz Khan were left in charge of the Government and 30,000 troops were distributed as garrisons in different forts of the Deccan. On Khurram's arrival at the court, he was accorded a rousing reception and festivities continued for days together. The prince was honoured with the title of Shahjahan and on his recommendation a *farman* was sent to the Sultan of Bijapur for the great service he rendered in securing the submission of the Nizamshah. In the *farman* the Emperor addressed him as '*farzand*' in appreciation of his late services.

But all this trumpeting was hardly justified for what had really been achieved was a mere restoration of the position of 1605. Khurram should have, at least, destroyed the military power of Ambar and taken precautions for preventing a repetition of his former exploits. No such thing was done. Shahjahan's attitude both as Prince and as Sovereign was of moderation and tolerance. He was not inimical to the existence of Deccan Sultanates and wanted them to remain as loyal vassals.

What happened in the reigns of Akbar and Aurangzeb perhaps justifies his policy of cautious paramountcy.

The hollowness of the victory of 1617 is testified by subsequent events. Malik Ambar remained at peace for two years during which he improved his internal administration, increased the strength of the counter-offensive of 1620 Maratha guerillas, and secured military assistance from Golkunda and Bijapur. Thus he was able to collect an army of 60,000 troops and in 1620, he started another counter-offensive. The imperialists won all the pitched battles but the Deccan armies continued to press them from all sides and succeeded in disrupting their supplies. They had to keep alert all the time ready to meet an attack at any moment. They lacked the vigour and the nerves to put up with such tremendous strains and, consequently, despite victories, Jahangir's armies continued to retreat, so that, the Deccanis gained more and more territory and fort after fort passed under their control almost without interstence. Emboldened by these successes they pursued the imperial army as far as Mandu, plundered and pillaged the land on their way and even laid siege to Mandu and Burhanpur.

The Marathas were delivering blow after blow while Abdur Rahim lacked the strength to retaliate vigorously and was constantly pressing for reinforcements. The stock charge that he had been corrupted by Deccan gold and was in collusion with the enemy cropped up once again. Shahjahan was sent again for a second time to the Deccan. He proceeded at the head of a large army and the mere report of his march forced the enemy to raise the siege of Mandu and Burhanpur. Shahjahan crossed the *Tapti*, and at the head of about 40,000 troops, made for Khirki, the new capital of the Nizamshahi kingdom, and completely destroyed it. Malik Ambar fell back on Daulatabad at the head of his troops and raised the siege of Ahmadnagar as well. Negotiations for peace were then started once again.

Shahjahan was anxious to return to the north because of the rapidly declining health of the Emperor with a view of a struggle for the throne. His army could also run short of supplies because of the scorched earth policy of the Deccanis. Hence, Shahjahan agreed to negotiations. Ambar restored all the conquered territory and agreed to pay 12 lakhs of rupees as indemnity for war. He also agreed to surrender a 14 *Kos* deep corridor all along the common frontier. Bijapur and Golkunda admitted their complicity and agreed to pay 18 lakh and 20 lakh rupees respectively to indemnify the losses of the Emperor. Shahjahan accepted the terms and the fighting came to an end.

The report of this victory was hailed as a great success and added a new feather to his cap. But this treaty, like the last one,

proved as hollow and transitory as that of 1617. In 1622 Shah-jahan rebelled against his father and sought help from Malik Ambar, but as the latter was engaged in a war against Bijapur he turned down his request. The Sultan of Bijapur now secured Mughal aid against Malik Ambar and started an offensive but Ambar turned round and inflicted a severe defeat on the allies. This heightened his prestige still more. Mahabat Khan was then sent against him, but he allied himself with Shahjahan. Thus till his death in 1626, he kept the Mughals at bay. After Ambar's death Hamid Khan became the head of the armed forces and though one group favoured submission to the Emperor, he started a fresh war and by a judicious combination of corruption and coercion secured the whole of Belaghat except Ahmadnagar. This was at the time when Jahangir was literally on his death bed.

Although some contact with Adilshahs had been established under Akbar, it was from the time of Jahangir that they began to figure more prominently in the Deccan politics of the Mughal Emperor. Bijapur was one of the succession states of the Bahmanid Kingdom and was founded by Yusuf Adil Shah in 1490. It soon became the most powerful Muslim state in the Deccan and dominated Deccan politics for about two hundred years. Like the Nizamshahs, the Adilshahs too, devoted their energies to fighting their neighbours and did precious little either to maintain peace in the Deccan or to develop friendly diplomatic ties with neighbouring states.

This state of affairs continued even under Akbar although the Deccan states had it clear to them to the hilt that if they remained disunited the Emperor would annex them one by one. Akbar's first contact with Ali Adilshah was when he sent a number of missions to the Deccan states demanding acceptance of his vassalage. Adilshah treated the envoys with due ceremony and even sent presents to the Emperor, but showed no inclination to part with his sovereignty merely for the asking. He was succeeded by Ibrahim Adilshah (1581-1627) in whose reign Mir Muhammad Amin was sent (1591) on a similar mission and with the same result. In the war against Ahmadnagar, Bijapur supported Chand Bibi and in 1597 even lent her troops for use against the Emperor, but the prolonged siege of Asirgarh, revolt of Salim and the necessity to return north forced Akbar into passivity. But before leaving, he sent a letter to the Adilshah demanding the hand of his daughter in marriage to Daniyal which Ibrahim promptly accepted.

When Jahangir came to the throne, the Deccan policy lost the vigour of the previous reign. This encouraged Ibrahim Adilshah to defy Jahangir's authority with impunity and to establish and conduct his foreign

The Adilshahs of
Bijapur

Akbar's relations
with the Adilshah

Jahangir and Ibrahim
Adilshah

relations as suited his interests best. He was generally in league with Malik Ambar and contributed to the success he had attained. Jahangir was aware of this, but as long as Malik Ambar had not been accounted for it was impossible to take any strong action against Adilshah. The best that could be done was occasionally to detach him from the Deccan league by diplomatic pressure supported by force. Thus in 1617 when Khurram sent Afzal Khan and Raja Vikramjit from Burhanpur to Adilshah, he was overawed by the might of the Prince and showed great diligence in securing submission of Nizamshah and was able to make such a convincing parade of his goodwill for the Emperor that he secured the coveted title of '*farzand*' from Jahangir. But no sooner the back of Khurram was turned, he showed his true colours and supported Malik Ambar again in 1620. When Shah-jahan went to the Deccan a second time, he was able to do nothing better than realize an indemnity of 18 lakhs of rupees from Ibrahim Adilshah. Malik Ambar and Adilshah now fell out and were engaged in active hostilities. The Adilshah now turned to the Mughals for protection and help. In 1623, he in a way accepted the suzerainty of the Emperor by agreeing to send 5,000 troops for his service under Mulla Muhammad Lari. In return, Adilshah received support from Mughal generals in the south and was thus able to save himself against the superior might of Ambar. But formal recognition of Mughal paramountcy by Adilshah had yet to wait for many more years.

The Qutbshahs of Golkunda were men of an altogether different mettle. The founder of this dynasty Sultan Quli Qutb-ul-mulk had declared his formal independence in 1512 although he had been exercising the substance of sovereignty ever since 1489.

The Qutbshahs on the whole followed a pacific foreign policy which may be dubbed as weak and cowardly. The rulers of this dynasty had a hoard of wealth of which diamonds and other jewels were unique. There were also a number of diamond mines in this state and Hyderabad soon rose to be the greatest diamond market in the world. With an industrious peasantry, a rich soil and the development of industry and craft, the ruler as well as the ruled had become mighty prosperous. It had a number of ports including Masulipattam which was the finest sea-port on the eastern side. The wealth flowing to the coffers of the Qutbshah from all these sources had been piling up from generation to generation so that stories of his fabulous wealth had travelled far and wide. A part of this wealth was utilized in buying off powerful neighbours rather than in raising troops to fight them. Even so, it was impossible for any state in the prevailing conditions of the Deccan at the time to adhere strictly to a policy of peace. Hence, the Qutbshahs used their wealth for the construction of forts at strategic points and equipped them with the finest armament available.

When Akbar sent diplomatic missions to the south in 1591, Muhammad Quli Qutbshah sent him rich presents. In the fight between the Emperor and the Nizamshah, Relations with Akbar and Jahangir Qutbshah usually helped the latter with money rather than with men. This policy was continued by Muhammad Qutbshah, a contemporary of Jahangir. When Shahjahan demanded indemnities from the Deccani rulers in 1621 Qutbshah paid the heaviest fine of 20 lakhs although his offence was the mildest, because he was the richest and the most peace loving. It was because of this pacificism that he allowed Shahjahan when in rebellion to pass through his territory to Orissa. Muhammad Qutbshah thus kept the Emperor on the whole satisfied though the occasion for formal submission to him had not yet arrived. He died a year before Jahangir.

If one compares the state of affairs in 1605 with that in 1627, the failure of Jahangir's policy will be quite apparent. He was even unable to retain in his grip the lands annexed by Akbar, and the imperial agents Reflections on the Deccan policy of Jahangir repeatedly had to fall back upon Burhanpur after losing all the lands south of the *Tapti*. And once they were even chased as far as Mandu in Malwa. At time when the imperial armies had the upper hand, the Deccanis were able to extricate themselves from difficult situations by paying a few lakhs of rupees to the Emperor. All this was a great slur on the power and prestige of the Emperor. In the meantime as a result of the efforts of Malik Ambar a new force—the Maratha guerillas—came into existence and was a great success.

What was the cause of this failure? It was primarily due to Malik Amber's dominant personality, resourceful diplomacy and great capacity both as a general and as a civil administrator. It was his genius that breathed new life into an effete monarchy, formed a league of the Deccan states and evolved a strategy of war suited to the land and the people of the Deccan and yet extremely inconvenient to the enemy. Besides, the Mughal generals generally succumbed to the lure of Deccan gold even when they were impervious to force. Their debased character, mutual quarrels, petty jealousies and incapacity to work together proved a blessing to their adversaries. Thirdly, there were groups and factions even at the Mughal court which when the health of the Emperor declined and death seemed imminent, got so engrossed in the prospects of a war of succession that a strong Deccan policy could not be followed. Lastly, the disturbances in the last years of the reign of Jahangir contributed in no small measure to the failure of his policy and prolonged the existence of the Nizamshahi Kingdom.

With the accession of Shahjahan to the throne, a new chapter in the history of the Deccan began. He was the first Timurid

ruler who had a detailed first-hand knowledge of the Deccan and had already made his mark as a great general. He was, therefore, eminently suited to carry the work of his grandfather Akbar to its logical conclusion. Fortunately for him, after the death of Malik Ambar Ahmadnagar once again lapsed into a state of mutual dissensions and ravenous jealousies so that the end of the Nizamshahs seemed to be imminent. Shahjahan's own rebellion had saved the Nizamshahi kingdom from extinction in his father's time. It was, therefore, his moral duty now to accomplish it. It is sometimes suggested that Shahjahan's Deccan policy was coloured by his religious convictions and hatred of the Shah of Persia. But this does not seem to be in consonance with facts, for if he had really been anti-Shia, he would have neither sat idle for twenty years between 1636 and 1656 nor would he have hampered the plans of his son Aurangzeb in 1656-1657. He was guided solely by personal ambition and the policy of expansionism inherited from his forefathers, while the dissensions among the Deccan states further stimulated these and the grant of asylum to the rebels against his authority aroused his passionate anger. But when the Nizamshahi kingdom came to an end and the rulers of Golkunda and Bijapur submitted to his authority, he allowed them to exist and left them at peace.

The Nizamshahs came to a very inglorious end. Murtaza II who had bribed Khan-i-Jahan Lodi to evacuate Belaghat appointed Muqarrab Khan as the chief of the army. In 1629 Khan-i-Jahan rebelled and joined the Nizamshah. Shahjahan now determined to punish the Nizamshah for his audacity. He won over a section of the Marathas by conferring *mansabs* on Kheloji and Maloji, and invading Ahmadnagar kingdom from three sides forced Khan-i-Jahan to seek shelter elsewhere. He occupied Nasik, Poona, Qandahar and Dharwar, and secured the services of another Maratha leader Shahji.

Murtaza Nizamshah had thrown into prison Fath Khan, a son of Ambar and his own brother-in-law because he and Muqarrab Khan could not pull on together. Now under the influence of his wife he released Fath Khan and appointed him as the wazir. This forced Muqarrab into the arms of the Mughals who used him in the war against Nizamshah. Fath Khan put the Nizamshah into prison and sought to ingratiate himself in the favour of the Mughals and when the latter demanded Murtaza's murder as a proof of his loyalty, he did not flinch from that either, and placing a ten year old lad Husain on the throne, had the *Khutba* read and the coins struck in the name of the Emperor.

But when the Mughal forces approached Daulatabad, the Bijapur generals Murari Pandit and Randola Khan impressed on him the dangers of submitting to Shahjahan and advised him not to surrender the fort to them, Fath Khan turned rebellious and opposed the advance of the imperial troops. Mahabat Khan, now the commander of the imperial army in the Deccan closely invested Daulatabad. Randola, Murari and Shahji tried to cut off his supplies and caused serious distraction by guerilla attacks. But Mahabat Khan pressed on the siege with great vigour and ability and defeated all efforts of his antagonists. Finally, he induced Fath Khan to surrender by offering him a bribe of 10 lakhs and entered the fort in triumph. Both Fath Khan and Husain Nizamshah were sent to Agra. The Emperor pensioned off both the king and the minister, confined Husain at Gwalior and proclaimed the annexation of his kingdom to the empire. Thus the Nizamshahi dynasty came to an end in 1633.

But Ahmadnagar knew no peace even then, for Shahji Bhonsle set up a Nizamshahi pretender and initiated a fight on his behalf from Konkan. He also tried to seize Daulatabad. The King of Bijapur now sent an army to occupy as much of Ahmadnagar territory as possible while another army was sent to collaborate with Shahji. Mahabat Khan tried to intimidate Adilshah by laying siege to Paranda but failed in the attempt and died. He was succeeded by Khan-i-Dauran who did not meet with much success. In September 1635, Shahjahan came to the Deccan himself and threatened to invade Bijapur. This brought the Adilshah to his knees and when the Emperor forced him to participate in the war against Shahji the latter also submitted in 1636. He surrendered all the forts and the puppet Nizamshah and entered the service of the Adilshah who gave him Poona and Supa in *jagir*. This finally ended the war with Ahmadnagar and brought a new *suba* to the empire.

The year 1636 marked an important stage in Mughal relations with Bijapur. We have already noticed how under Akbar and Jahangir Ibrahim Adilshah had always sided with Ahmadnagar against the Emperor. He died a few months before Jahangir and was succeeded by Muhammad Adilshah. Shahjahan tried to detach him permanently to his side by intervening in his favour in the frontier disputes with Ahmadnagar. But the Adilshah was not a free agent. His court was sharply divided into two camps namely, Mustafa who supported war against the Nizamshah and alliance with the Mughals, and Randola Khan the commander of Bijapuri army who opposed this policy and led the group that regarded extension of Mughal authority in any sector as detrimental to the interests of Bijapur.

In the beginning Mustafa was the *Wazir*, and it was on his advice that Shahjahan's envoy was welcomed with great honour and Randola Khan was ordered to collaborate with the Mughal generals against the Nizamshah. Randola, however, paid only lip sympathy to this move and favoured an alliance with Fath Khan instead of supporting the Mughal general Azam Khan whom he attacked in collaboration with Khawas Khan.

In the meantime, Shahjahan arrived in the Deccan and after overcoming Fath Khan sent an army under Asaf Khan to invade Bijapur. The Bijapuri nobles opened negotiations for peace in order to gain time and when they had mustered sufficient strength suddenly broke off negotiations and opened hostilities again which could have caused heavy losses to the imperial army had not Mustafa warned them of its danger beforehand. Thus was reached a stage of open rupture with the Bijapuri court.

Randola Khan, Murari Pandit and Shahji Bhonsle were now directed to intervene actively in the war against the Emperor in Ahmadnagar. In view of this Mahabat Khan asked for reinforcements to chastise Adilshah but the Emperor sent only Prince Shuja to the Deccan. Mahabat's failure at Parenda so shocked him that he died in 1634.

But the Bijapuri nobles could not take advantage of this situation because of their internal quarrels. Khawas Khan gaining the upper hand, threw Mustafa into prison and allied himself with Murari Pandit. This led to a conspiracy in which both Khawas Khan and Murari Pandit were murdered. Mustafa was once more restored to the office of *Wazir* joined hands with Randola Khan to negotiate a peace with Shahjahan.

The Emperor was so disgusted with the conduct of Adilshah that he declined to entertain any peace proposals. But the Bijapuri envoy Abul Hasan acted with great tact and forbearance and ultimately succeeded in mollifying the anger of the Emperor to the extent that a treaty was made in 1636. Adilshah acknowledged the suzerainty of the Emperor and agreed to pay him 20 lakhs of rupees as *peh-kash*. He also agreed to submit all his disputes with the Qutbshah for arbitration by the Emperor. He further promised to withdraw all support from Shahji. In order to prevent future disputes, the Emperor defined the Bijapuri frontier after carefully scrutinizing his claims over Nizamshahi territory and finally assigning to him lands worth 80 lakh rupees a year comprising among others Sholapur, Vengi, Poona and North Konkan. The Adilshah recognized the incorporation of the rest of the Nizamshahi kingdom into the Mughal empire. This treaty ensured almost twenty years of peace between them.

The advantage, thus gained, was utilized by the Emperor to come to a definite arrangement with the Qutbshah as well.

The Treaty of
1636

Muhammad Qutbshah had died in 1626 and was succeeded by his eleven year old son Abdullah Qutbshah. Previously, whenever the Emperor had made any demands, the Qutbshahi nobles generally succeeded in buying him off with rich presents, but in 1633, the Emperor's tone became more peremptory and his demands more humiliating. Many factors contributed to this. As contact with Golkunda increased, the Emperor realized its extreme wealth and utter weakness. Naturally, his demand for acceptance of vassalage became increasingly more pressing and his lust for gold insatiable. He also had a grievance against the Qutbshah because he had been giving assistance to rebels against the Emperor such as Malik Ambar or Jujhar Singh. Moreover, Qutbshah's persistence in reading the *Khutba* in the name of the Shah of Persia was now no longer tolerable to the Emperor who insisted on the inclusion of his own name and payment of an annual tribute. The state religion of Golkunda was Shiaism and there was the practice of *tabarra* (condemnation of certain acts of the first three caliphs of Islam and of certain companions of the Prophet) in vogue among its subjects. The Emperor wanted to put an end to all this. That is why after the collapse of the Nizamshahi kingdom, he browbeat the Qutbshah from a position of strength into accepting terms dictated by him. Namely,

(1) Inclusion of the name of all the first four caliphs in the official prayer and insertion of the name of the Emperor in the *Khutba* and the *sikka*.

(2) Acceptance of the suzerainty of the Emperor and remaining steadfast in loyalty to him or in default to suffer deposition by the Emperor.

(3) The Sultan shall pay to the Emperor an annual tribute of 2 lakh *huns* (=8 lakhs of rupees in 1636) and shall clear off arrears.

(4) In the event of the Bijapuri army attacking Golkunda the Emperor will offer him protection, and, in case of failure shall forfeit to the Qutbshah a sum chargeable from the annual tribute—equal to the losses suffered by him.

Acceptance of this treaty put an end to the sovereignty of the Qutbshah, made Sunnism the state religion, removed the influence of the Shah of Persia and enhanced the prestige of the Mughal sovereign. It also had the germs of future wars implicit in it because the exchange ratio of the *hun* led to numerous squabbles later on.

Having made these arrangements, the Emperor thought he could safely return to the north. Prince Aurangzeb who was then only 18 years of age was appointed as the Viceroy of the Deccan and imperial officers and commanders were ordered to restore peace and

The First Vice-royalty of Aurangzeb (1636-1644)

order throughout the newly acquired territory by settling the peasants and establishing a regular government. Khirki, the new Nizamshahi capital was rechristened Aurangabad and made the headquarters of the Viceroy. He took vigorous measures to inspire confidence and loyalty in all quarters and the peasants were treated well; a revenue system based on that of Malik Ambar was enforced. This gradually revived agriculture and brought some revenue to the State. But much progress could not be made because of strong upheavals consequent upon the recent change of dynasty.

After Aurangzeb's departure from the Deccan, Mughal territory suffered heavily because of neglect of Governmental affairs by corrupt and indolent officers. When he
 Second Viceroyalty of Aurangzeb (1653-1657) failed to reconquer Qandahar in 1652, he was sent to the Deccan a second time. This was done as a mark of displeasure rather than confidence in the ability of the Prince. In the instrument of instructions given to him at the time of his appointment, he was directed to improve agriculture and increase the revenues of the province. He there-
 after received repeated *farmans* reminding him of these duties.

Aurangzeb found the Deccan in an appalling state. During his absence from there, the affairs of the government had reached such a sorry state and the condition of the people had become so bad that the annual revenues of the province had dwindled in 1652 from 3 crores 62 lakhs of rupees to a mere crore. Oppression and misrule had led to the neglect of agriculture so that there were many tracts lying fallow and desolate. The tenants had migrated to other places leading to depopulation and desolation in the countryside. Hence no part of the Deccan yielded the revenue shown in the records of the finance department at the capital. The result was that sometimes an assignee got only ten percent of the nominal valuation. In such circumstances no honest officer could pay the cost of his living. All protests to the office of the *Diwan* fell on deaf ears. The result was that no officer in the Deccan could afford to be honest. Aurangzeb discovered that his own *jagir* yielded 17 lakhs less than what had been shown on paper. He therefore requested that he should be kept on the cash payment toll. This was, however, turned down but he was permitted to exchange his *jagir* with any other region in the Deccan he liked.

Aurangzeb also discovered that the Deccan had become a deficit province and needed a subsidy of 20 lakhs of rupees to meet the cost of administration. But because of the evil influence of Dara, he expected from the Emperor no courtesy much less generosity while he had also to prepare himself for the war of succession. Hence, duty as well as self-interest demanded the improvement of Deccan finances as an immediate necessity. The Prince, therefore, took his *Diwan* Murshid Quli Khan into confidence and while exhorting him to introduce speedy and effective reforms

promised him all support and cooperation in making them a success. Murshid Quli was a capable officer and he used all his energies for the execution of his assignment. Tenants were induced to return to their fields. Honest and efficient *muqaddams* were appointed in charge of them and sincere workers were appointed as *amins* to prepare a proper record of arable, fallow and forest lands in different villages. Wherever necessary loans were advanced to tenants to enable them to purchase good seeds, oxens, and other accessories. Where the yield was sub-normal and peasants distrustful of the new measures of reform, the older practice of treating the plough as the unit of land revenue was continued. At other places, the peasant was permitted to elect for division of crops if he so liked. But where the land was good and the yield satisfactory, he introduced a cash rate modelled on the systems of Todar Mal and Malik Ambar based on the area of land, nature of crop and current prices, and fixed it at 25% of the average produce. He kept a strict vigilance throughout so that no *muqaddam* or *amin* could resort to any unlawful methods of oppressing the peasant. These measures revived and improved agriculture which added to the revenues of the state. The land settlement now enforced continued for generations and was known as 'Murshid Quli's *dhara*.'

Along with the agricultural tone up Aurangzeb tried to tone up the general administration as well. A thorough check was held and all inefficient and corrupt hands were removed or reduced in rank. The rules framed by the Prince were strictly enforced without any discrimination for or against anybody. Next, a survey was made of conditions in the royal forts and all old and decrepit staff was cashiered and replaced by competent personnel. They were subject to frequent inspections and reviews, so that, they were obliged to keep a high standard of efficiency and devotion to duty. Forts were repaired and stocked with munitions and supplies in proportion to their importance and requirements. The result was that within a short period of time Deccan was well on the road to recovery.

Aurangzeb effected all these reforms in the most trying circumstances, because, as his letters testify, he received from the Emperor only insults, rebukes, neglect or jeers. He was charged with stealing the fruit of a mango tree called *Badshah-pasand* (favourite of the Emperor), his *jagir* was reduced without any rhyme or reason, his proposals were turned down without reference to their merits, false complaints by his subordinates were made the basis for passing strictures against him and he was maliciously represented as guilty of both incompetence and insubordination. These at times so exasperated the Prince that he replied to jeers and sarcasms by bitter comments in a similar vein, while he sometimes appealed to his sister Jahanara to bring about a change in the attitude of the Emperor.

In these circumstances, Aurangzeb was most wary in his movements and plans. The result being that within a short period of time the administration, the army and the finances were transformed beyond recognition. He now began to turn in his mind plans for conquest which by their glory and brilliance should obliterate the infamy of Qandahar, while also anxious to test the mettle of his troops and officers in the light of the future war of succession. He now sought an excuse for war which the Emperor might approve.

War could be made only against Bijapur or Golkunda or both. The Qutbshah had been assiduous in keeping the Emperor satisfied ever since the humiliating peace of 1636 and had been sending to the Emperor occasional presents over and above the stipulated tribute. But he was not very regular in the payment which sometimes led to acrimonious correspondence. Then there were wrangles over the exchange rate. Shahjahan's farman of 1636 had clarified that the tribute payable was 2 lakh of *huns*, equivalent to 8 lakhs of rupees. When the exchange ratio of *hun* rose to $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 rupees, the imperial agents demanded 9 or 10 lakhs or rupees in place of the 8 lakhs which the Qutbshah insisted was not subject to variation because it had been clearly stated in the *farman* that the tribute would be 2 lakh *huns* or 8 lakh rupees. When Aurangzeb reached the Deccan in 1653, he made a peremptory demand for clearing up all arrears and calculated the dues in terms of rupees according to the varying rates of exchange. The Qutbshah did send some money but according to Aurangzeb's computation he was still heavily in arrears.

In the meantime, another cause of quarrel cropped up. Mir Jumla, the *wazir* of the Qutbshah obtained for himself a *jagir* in the Carnatic. He later made large additions to it by successful wars against the local Hindu Rajas and his annual income rose to over 40 lakh rupees. This area had a number of diamond mines and he was reputed to have amassed a huge treasure consisting of 20 maunds of diamonds and large quantities of gold and precious jewels which had made him the richest man in the Deccan. He was a gifted administrator and commanded a fine park of European artillery. Before his departure to the Carnatic he had been the virtual ruler of Golkunda. But when he settled down in Carnatic more or less as an independent prince, keeping all his great wealth exclusively to himself, his enemies got a chance to poison the ears of the Qutbshah against him. Getting scent of his master's displeasure Mir Jumla started negotiations with the Emperor for employment under him and secured a *mansab*. This greatly infuriated the Qutbshah so that when Muhammad Amin, the son of Mir Jumla offended the Sultan by his conduct he was thrown into prison (Nov. 1655).

Aurangzeb's charges against the Qutbshah were constantly piling up. He was irregular in payment, had seized Carnatic without permission and, on Mir Jumla entering the service of the Emperor had thrown his dependents into jail. The Emperor wrote to Qutbshah that he should immediately release Muhammad Amin and his dependents and send them to court along with all their property. He also wrote to Aurangzeb that in case Qutbshah did not comply with the imperial *farman* he should launch an attack on him.

Aurangzeb made this *farman* the basis of his invasion and ordered his son Muhammad Sultan to move rapidly on Hyderabad and if possible to lighten the body of Qutbshah of the burden of his head (January 1656).

Outbreak of hostilities Qutbshah on his side sent Muhammad Amin and his family to Aurangzeb and offered to comply with all demands. But Aurangzeb pressed on the struggle and Muhammad Sultan occupied and looted Hyderabad while the Qutbshah fled for his life to Golkunda. Qutbshah now made frantic efforts to stop hostilities. He flattered the young prince and showered rich presents on him and his chief adjutants. When Aurangzeb himself came up to besiege Golkunda, he sent presents to him as well. But Aurangzeb had his eye on the entire treasure and the whole of the kingdom. Qutbshah's agent at Delhi now made rich presents to Shahjahan, Dara and Jahanara and enlisted the support of Dara in his master's favour. And on his pointing out the irregularities of Aurangzeb in the whole episode the Emperor sent Aurangzeb a peremptory order in March 1656 for immediate cessation of war and return to his post. Aurangzeb now had no option but to comply.

But even then he squeezed as much out of Qutbshah as possible. Muhammad Sultan was married to the daughter of the Qutbshah; a part of his territory was annexed and a crore of rupees was realized as arrears of tribute and indemnity of war. If Dara and Shahjahan had not intervened the Qutbshahi dynasty might well have been ended just then. Mir Jumla waited on Aurangzeb with all his glorious retinue and was sent forward to the capital where he was given a *mansab* of 6000 and appointed *wazir* (July 1656).

Balked of his intentions in Golkunda, Aurangzeb next turned his attention to Bijapur. After the treaty of 1636, Muhammad Adilshah spent the remaining twenty years of his life in promoting the prosperity of his kingdom. The treaty assured him of a permanent peace on the northern frontier. To make assurance doubly certain he scrupulously respected the wishes of the Emperor. In 1642, he was offended by Mustafa's vanity and had thrown him into prison but when the Emperor intervened in his favour he promptly restored him to his former dignities. This had gratified Shahjahan so much that he conferred the title of 'Shah' on him. Similarly,

Conditions in Bijapur

when the Emperor objected to his award of the title of Khan-i-Khanan to one of his nobles, or holding of darbars like independent sovereigns or staging elephant fights he stopped them forthwith.

But he freely extended his frontiers towards the south and and the west so that his kingdom soon extended from sea to sea. He introduced internal reforms, improved administration of justice and promoted public welfare. His piety and sincerity won for him respect and popularity among his subjects. In 1656, the popular old monarch died and a lad of 18 was placed on the throne as Ali Adilshah II.

Aurangzeb seized upon this as the most suitable opportunity for war. He reported to the Emperor that after the death of Muhammad Adilshah a boy of obscure origin

Aurangzeb's report to the Emperor had been elevated to the throne and that a majority of the people in Bijapur had no faith in the court version circulated by Bari Saheba and her clique that he was the son of the late Sultan born of a slave girl, but adopted and brought up by Bari Saheba. He further submitted that he did not recommend any particular line of action and would abide by the orders received from him. His only prayer was that once an order had been given he should be allowed to carry it through.

Aurangzeb also addressed certain letters to Mir Jumla and Shayasta Khan and indicated this unconcern about what the Emperor decided. But in his secret letters to Mir Jumla, he exhorted him to secure permission for invasion of Bijapur and come at the head of the army himself. All this camouflage was intended to deceive Dara because Aurangzeb was convinced that if his elder brother came to know of his desire for war he would use all his influence to prevent it.

According to Sarkar, Aurangzeb had made up his mind to invade Bijapur. His army was in a state of mobilisation, ready to march at a moment's notice and he was making free use of gold to set Bijapuri nobles against Alishah II. But he regards such provocative conduct and interference in the domestic issues of an autonomous state like Bijapur as 'wholly unrighteous'. On the other hand Faruqi supports Aurangzeb's attitude on the following grounds :

(a) Bijapur was a vassal state because, *peshkash* means tribute, and since 1631 when the Adilshah agreed to pay *peshkash* to the Emperor, the latter had treated him as a vassal prince and had interfered in its domestic affairs.

(b) If Ali had been born of a royal slave girl, there was no need to adopt him because he would be the heir of the Sultan by virtue of his birth alone.

(c) It was the duty of the paramount power to see that no unauthorised person occupied the throne.

(d) Aurangzeb was indifferent to the matter of invasion. It was Mir Jumla who had a grievance against Dara because he had paid no heed to his interests. Mir Jumla sought to avenge himself by defeating the pacifist policy of Dara.

There is some force in the above arguments but the interpretation of *peshkash* is a little too arbitrary; that of adoption, a little too technical and the influence of Mir Jumla a little stressed. It would perhaps be nearer the truth to say that although Aurangzeb wanted to invade Bijapur and was making the necessary preparations for it, he apparently evinced no enthusiasm for it and left the burden of choice on the Emperor alone.

Mir Jumla eagerly supported the move because he had some old scores to settle with the Adilshah who had allowed Shahji to seize and occupy Mir Jumla's former *jagir* in the Carnatic. Aurangzeb, finally, got a blank cheque with permission to do whatever he thought best. The Adilshah was asked to pay an indemnity of a crore and a half of rupees and cede the Nizamshahi territory allowed to him in 1636. In case of non-compliance, the Prince could depose the Adilshah and annex the whole kingdom. The Emperor also sent Mir Jumla at the head of 20,000 troops for the assistance of Aurangzeb.

As soon as Mir Jumla reached the Deccan, Aurangzeb ordered a general offensive. He wanted to clinch the issue as quickly as possible. The fort of Bidar was captured in March 1657 after a siege of 27 days.

War against Bijapur (1657) Kalyani followed suit a little later after a siege of four months. The Adilshahi troops fought valiantly in defence of their master and their guerillas greatly harassed the invaders. But they steadily had to yield ground and the end of the kingdom itself seemed imminent.

But, fortunately for them, Shahjahan was incapacitated from attending to public business on account of a serious and prolonged illness. Dara as the declared heir carried on the government on his behalf. The Adilshahi envoys met him at the capital and informed him of their master's readiness to pay an indemnity of one crore of rupees and to cede all the territory demanded by the Emperor. If Shahjahan had been well, he would have certainly accepted these terms. Dara was doubly willing to do so lest in the event of the Emperor's death the balance may not be too heavily tilted in favour of Aurangzeb commanding the Deccan army and the resources of the Bijapur kingdom. He, therefore, accepted the prayers of the Bijapuri agents and sent a *farman* in the name of the Emperor ordering immediate cessation of hostilities and return to Bidar. Separate orders were sent to other generals to return to the north at the head of their respective contingents and some of them complied immediately without any reference to Aurangzeb. Because of such a precipitate with-

drawal Adilshah neither paid the indemnity nor ceded the stipulated territory such as Parenda—still in his possession. Aurangzeb himself became alarmed by reports from the north to involve himself in any fresh entanglements in Bijapur. He therefore stopped all fighting and devoted his energies to preparing for the war of succession. This gave the Adilshah a welcome respite and he utilized it for consolidating his position.

Muhammad Adilshah had greatly enhanced the strength and resources of Bijapur and its revenue amounted to 13 crores of rupees a year. He had used a part of this income to organise a large army consisting of 80,000 cavalry, 2,50,000 infantry and 530 war-elephants. Besides, he was the master of a number of ports and his treasury was replete with gold and jewels. A competent sovereign could turn these resources to great advantage.

But it had its own besetting problems some of which defied all solution. A number of self-seeking foreign adventurers had been allowed to settle down in the country. They had joined mutually jealous factions often at war with one another. They intermarried within their own groups and thus retained their exclusive character despite their long settlement in the land. Chief among these were Afghans, Abyssinians, Arabs and Sayyads. Then, there were the indigenous Muslim nobles and Hindu Rajas. Each one of these groups had their own armed retainers and spheres of influence. In order to keep them at peace and to reduce the power of their enemies the Sultans usually adopted an aggressive foreign policy. But even inspite of that they were often divided by serious rivalries and indulged in conspiracies against one another to secure all the prize posts for themselves in the civil and military administration of the state. The minority of Ali Adilshah gave a fresh momentum to this internal strife and a general decline of the state. It was at this stage that two dominant personalities appeared on the scene of action *viz.* Aurangzeb and Shivaji. Before we turn to their activities we may pause to consider the results of the policy of Shahjahan.

Shahjahan secured a positive advance in the extension of his authority over the Deccan during his reign of over 28 years. An estimate of the Deccan Policy of Shahjahan In his reign the Nizamshahi kingdom came to an end and Qutbshah and Adilshah lost their sovereignty and parts of their territory. They might have suffered the fate of the Nizamshah had not the Emperor stayed the hands of his son. As indicated earlier, Shahjahan seems to have been opposed to a policy of annexation. Like Alauddin he tolerated the existence of tributary vassal states and while anxious to impose his supremacy over them did not object to the extension of their authority in neutral territory. He also abstained from interfering in their internal affairs as long as they did not infringe his imperial prerogatives. It is not very fruitful to speculate on mere possibilities but it seems that the

Empire would have faced far less danger in the Deccan in the reign of Aurangzeb if he had been permitted by his father to liquidate the effete sultanates before Shivaji acquired a strong footing in Maharashtra.

In the reign of Aurangzeb, a new power gradually emerged on the scene. The Emperor realized the danger of neglecting it, and therefore, as soon as he was free from the war of succession he turned towards the south. Despite his dissatisfaction against Adilshah and Qutbshah he was willing to let them continue provided they sincerely submitted to his authority and cooperated in the destruction of the common enemy—the Marathas. When this policy of collaboration failed and there was a danger of Maratha-Rajput axis being formed to place a puppet of their choice on the throne of Delhi the Emperor marched to the south and destroyed Bijapur and Golkunda only when he was convinced of their utter faithlessness and incurable friendship for the Marathas.

Aurangzeb had first-hand knowledge of conditions in the Deccan. His memory was still fresh of how Adilshah had leaned on the support of Dara and later disregarded even the terms proposed by himself. But he was willing to overlook all these faults if Adilshah loyally collaborated in the war against the Marathas. Shayasta Khan, the maternal uncle of the Emperor and viceroy of the Deccan (1660-1663) invited Ali Adilshah II to attack the Marathas from the south while he attacked them from the north. Ali realizing the danger to his own state from the powerful Marathas therefore did as he was told. But as soon as he had reoccupied his lost forts, he relaxed the pressure on Shivaji and even gave him secret help against the Emperor. All this while the pretence of collaboration with the Emperor was kept up. The reason for this strange behaviour was that Ali Adilshah had no faith in the imperial professions of friendship and apprehended an attack on his own state once the Marathas had been liquidated. The Marathas, therefore, appeared to him as his first line of defence. Besides, he was interested in prolonging the struggle between the Emperor and the Marathas so that Shivaji may have no leisure to attack Bijapur. The Adilshah was in fact neither friendly to the Emperor nor to the Marathas as it suited his self-interest best to remain on good terms with both and keep them engaged in a mutual war.

But Adilshah could not play this double role for long as the Emperor and his agents clearly saw through it. Hence in 1664, the Emperor asked him either to drive Shivaji out of the Konkan where he was creating trouble or if he wanted to enrol him in his service he might do so but should assign him a *jagir* in the Carnatic so that he might keep off from the imperial territory. But

Times of Aurang-
zeb

Duplicity of Bija-
pur (1660-1665)

Adilshah loyally collaborated in the war against the Marathas. Shayasta Khan, the maternal uncle of the Emperor and viceroy of the Deccan (1660-1663) invited Ali Adilshah II to attack the Marathas from the south while he attacked them from the north. Ali realizing the danger to his own state from the powerful Marathas therefore did as he was told. But as soon as he had reoccupied his lost forts, he relaxed the pressure on Shivaji and even gave him secret help against the Emperor. All this while the pretence of collaboration with the Emperor was kept up. The reason for this strange behaviour was that Ali Adilshah had no faith in the imperial professions of friendship and apprehended an attack on his own state once the Marathas had been liquidated. The Marathas, therefore, appeared to him as his first line of defence. Besides, he was interested in prolonging the struggle between the Emperor and the Marathas so that Shivaji may have no leisure to attack Bijapur. The Adilshah was in fact neither friendly to the Emperor nor to the Marathas as it suited his self-interest best to remain on good terms with both and keep them engaged in a mutual war.

But Adilshah could not play this double role for long as the Emperor and his agents clearly saw through it. Hence in 1664, the Emperor asked him either to drive Shivaji out of the Konkan where he was creating trouble or if he wanted to enrol him in his service he might do so but should assign him a *jagir* in the Carnatic so that he might keep off from the imperial territory. But

Jaya Singh attacks
Bijapur (1665-
1666)

this had no effect upon Adilshah who made a show of sending his troops against Shivaji but kept constantly in secret league with him.

Hence Jay Singh decided to take action against him when the war against Shivaji had been concluded by the treaty of Purandar (1665). The Emperor gave his sanction and Jay Singh made careful preparations for a short and swift campaign. Qutbshah was detached from the side of Adilshah, Shivaji was roped in as an active participant on promise of a *jagir* of 16 lakh rupees in the Konkan and 20 lakhs in the Balaghat. A number of Bijapuri nobles were also won over by promises of gold and high office. He is said to have spent a crore out of his own private purse beside the funds provided by the state. Having made all preparations, he invaded Bijapur in November 1665 at the head of 40,000 troops while Shivaji led 9,000 Marathas as Mughal auxiliaries. One Bijapur fort after another fell in quick succession and he could reach as far as 12 miles from the capital itself, but was unable to capture it and finally had to return discomfited.

There were many factors which contributed to Jay Singh's failure. The Bijapuri army had followed the scorched earth policy within a radius of six miles all around the fort. They destroyed the crops, cut down the trees, destroyed all habitations, drained away the tanks and filled the wells with earth. Consequently, no large army could stay on for long within this ring of desolation. Secondly, Qutbshah, alarmed by the rapid success of the imperialists had sent 12,000 cavalry and 40,000 infantry to reinforce Adilshah. Besides, Shivaji's general Netaji was purchased by Bijapuri gold and in collaboration with the Bijapuri general Bahlul Khan started ravaging and plundering the imperial territory. Deceived by his earlier successes, Jay Singh had dashed forward without caring to carry heavy cannon with him. The enemy avoided an open engagement and relied on guerilla attacks to harass the imperialists and disrupt their line of supplies, thus causing shortage of supplies and munitions. The result was that Jay Singh had to fall back on Aurangabad and the Bijapuris reoccupied all that they had lost. The Emperor, greatly enraged, recalled Jaya Singh for his failure.

The last six years of Ali Adilshah's life were a period of comparative repose. Although he devoted most of his time in pursuing a life of indolent pleasure, his energetic

Decline of Bijapur
(1666-1680)

wazir Abdul Muhammad kept the administration orderly. But after the Sultan's death in 1672, Khawas Khan and Bahlul Khan became keen rivals for supremacy. Abdul Muhammad stepped down and the decline of Bijapur began. Khawas Khan sought the help of the Emperor in destroying the power of the Afghan leader Bahlul. But Bahadur Khan, the imperial agent in the Deccan sought to fish in troubled waters by provoking a fight between the rival groups.

Khawas Khan ultimately secured the regency of Sultan Sikandar and ruled over Bijapur from 1672 to 1675. He made wild promises—marriage of Sikandar's sister in the Timurid family, payment of salary arrears to the Afghans and cooperation in the war against Shivaji—which he never fulfilled. When Bahlul came to know of his intrigues, he captured and killed him. Then for the next two years Bahlul remained at the helm of affairs. He won over Diler Khan, an Afghan next in command to Bahadur Khan. Then, they both preferred charges of corruption against Bahadur Khan and secured his dismissal. But Bahlul died in 1677 and was succeeded by Masud who reverted to the policy of Khawas Khan. The Afghans rose in arms against him and Diler Khan invaded the kingdom in sympathy with them. But he too failed to capture Bijapur and returned unsuccessful in 1680. The Emperor had appointed Prince Shah Alam in place of Bahadur Khan, but after the failure of 1680, he recalled both the Prince and his Afghan deputy, Diler Khan. As a result of operations during 1665 to 1680 the frontiers of the Mughal Empire extended to the northern bank of the *Bhima* and Malkhed near the frontiers of Golkunda. The Emperor thus acquired the forts of Kalyani, Bidar, Parenda, Sholapur, Naldrug and Gulburga.

After Diler Khan's failure there was peace in the Deccan for some time. But in 1681 Prince Akbar fled from Rajputana and joined Shambhuji. This greatly perturbed the Emperor. He sent urgent *farman*s not only to his own commanders and officers in the Deccan but also to Sharza Khan a Bijapuri noble to exert themselves to their utmost in order to capture the Prince and send him to court. But when operations against Shambhuji did not prove much of a success, the Emperor came to the Deccan himself and soon discovered that Adilshah was in league with the Marathas. To put an end to this, he sent a *farman* to the Adilshah in 1684 making the following demands :

- (i) That, Adilshah should arrange for supplies to the Mughal army.
- (ii) He should guarantee a free and peaceful passage to the Mughal army through his territory,
- (iii) He should stop helping Shambhuji and supply 5000 troops to the Emperor for employment against him.
- (iv) Sharza Khan should be banished from the kingdom.

When the *farman* reached Sikandar, Sharza Khan himself was in power. Hence the reply to the Emperor was drafted according to his views. Sikandar put forward counter-proposals and made cooperation contingent on their acceptance by the Emperor. These proposals were :—

- (i) Sharza Khan should be pardoned.

(ii) All Bijapuri territory and property seized in the past should be restored.

(iii) The imperial army should be withdrawn from Bijapur territory and should attack Shambhuji via Chakan and Poona while attack from Bijapuri territory would be the sole responsibility of the Bijapuri army subject to its right of claiming reinforcements from the Emperor in the hour of need.

(iv) No peace should be made with the Marathas as long as they did not surrender all Bijapuri territory in their possession and the same was not handed over to Bijapuri agents.

The Emperor flew into a rage at the impudence of these proposals. But as he wanted to concentrate his energy against the Marathas he did not take any immediate action. When, however, it was definitely established that Sikandar had entered into an open alliance with Shambhuji, he sent an army in March 1685 with instructions to lay siege to Bijapur.

Sikandar knew that an invasion was imminent and had started preparations on that basis. He secured promises of help from Qutbshah and Shambhuji and started stocking the capital with adequate supplies of grain and ammunition. Even after a siege of over fifteen months the fort could not be captured because Shambhuji and the Qutbshah threw their weight in favour of Adilshah and their guerilla attacks coupled with a withering bombardment from inside the fort rendered all approach to its walls impossible. Now, Aurangzeb proceeded to the scene of action himself. This caused consternation in the ranks of the enemy. Finally, they thought of a device to save themselves and sent some *Mullas-Quran* in hand—to the Emperor. They asked the Emperor whether as an orthodox Muslim he regarded war against a brother Muslim legal. The Emperor said, "I do not covet your territory. But the infidel son of the infernal infidel stands at your elbow and has found refuge with you. He is troubling Muslims from here to the gates of Delhi, and their complaints reach me day and night. Surrender him to me and the next moment I shall raise the siege." This silenced the theologians and Sikandar was obliged to surrender the fort and himself to the mercy of the Emperor. When the Emperor noticed his extreme youth and handsome features he regretted the cruel necessity of sending the luckless man to prison to pine away to death in 1700.

The state of Bijapur was annexed to the empire and the Adilshahi dynasty came to an end after a career of about two hundred years. The glory of Bijapur declined and soon the thriving capital began to show scenes of desolation and decay. It was in 1656 that Aurangzeb had first planned to put an end to the Adilshahs. Akbar and Jahangir had not gone beyond exacting

Annexation of
Bijapur

respect by a show of superior might. Shahjahan had deprived it of its sovereignty but had respected its autonomy within a wide field. It was Aurangzeb who for the first time conceived the idea of annexing it to the empire when he felt it had become rotten to the core. But when the Marathas came into prominence he switched off his attention from Adilshah to Shivaji and his successor. He had hoped that after the experiences of 1660, the Adilshahs in their own interest would realize the imperative need to destroy the Marathas. That is why he invited them to cooperate with him. But when he was convinced that the Bijapuris would persist in their policy of formal submission to the Emperor but secret alliance with the Marathas, he had no alternative but to annex it. The Adilshah might have had better luck if the internal condition of his state had been sound. The Bijapuris thus overestimated the strength of their allies. The Emperor on the contrary underestimated the power of the the Adilshah. That is why Jay Singh, Khan-i-Jahan, Diler Khan and Prince Azam failed in their attempts against it. The Emperor and his agents often tried to secure traitors in the Adilshahi camp by dangling before them the lure of gold and office but it never proved very efficacious. As a sop to local discontent, the Emperor retained in office all the nobles and members of public services and assigned to them posts suited to their rank and ability.

The annexation of Bijapur was soon followed by the annexation of Golkunda. In 1656, Qutbshah had been saved by the timely intervention of Dara. But this made Aurangzeb's dislike of him all the more intense. If Aurangzeb had not been deterred from invading Golkunda by his preoccupation with the Afghans, Satnamis, Rajputs, Marathas and the Adilshah he would have deposed Abdullah Qutbshah pretty early in his reign. The attitude of the Emperor gradually softened towards the Qutbshah because he generally sent his tribute punctually.

But the Qutbshah incurred Aurangzeb's displeasure by assisting Bijapur in 1655-1666 and by offering a subsidy to Shivaji in 1666. Shahjahan claimed sovereignty over Mir Jumla's former *jagir* in the Carnatic and assigned it to Mir Jumla. But the Qutbshah never allowed the Emperor to occupy it and during the war of succession (1657-1658) had consolidated his hold over it by appointing his own officers over its different districts. This could well be made the *causus belli* but Aurangzeb had neither the leisure nor the inclination to make war against him.

After Abdullah's death, his son-in-law Abul Hasan was raised to the throne. He was a sensual voluptuary. Hence during his regime, the nobles got the upper hand. Anarchy and oppression had set in ever since Abdullah's neglect of public business. Public morals were unusually low and within the capital itself

there were 20,000 brothels and more than a thousand drinking houses.

A Brahmin family acquired great ascendancy during the reign of Abul Hasan. Madanna Pandit became the Prime Minister in 1673 while his brother Akanna became the Commander-in-chief of the army. Yengana, another member of this family occupied a high place in the army. The Hindus now lived a life of honour and even received grants for temples from Madanna. This was an eyesore to the fanatic minded nobles and theologians who misrepresented their personal gifts to Hindu temples as misuse of government funds and entered into conspiracies to put an end to their power by addressing complaints to the Emperor.

This meant further disintegration. Madanna and his group could not introduce any measures of general reform that could enhance their prestige in the eyes of the people. On the contrary, their foreign policy was subjected to a virulent criticism and made the basis for whipping up anti-Hindu bias of the Emperor. Madanna thought that the safety of Golkunda was contingent on the continuance of Bijapur and the Marathas. That is why, although he did not generally deviate from the traditional pacifist policy, he always intervened on behalf of Bijapur whenever he thought her very existence was in danger—for example in 1679 and 1686. Similarly, he was convinced that it was beyond his power to suppress the Marathas. He, therefore, tried to keep them engaged in a struggle against Adilshah or the Emperor and even helped them to become more powerful so that Bijapur or the Emperor may not have leisure to send their armies against Golkunda. That is why, he not only supported the policy initiated in 1666 but even amplified it. He allowed Shivaji a passage through his territory to invade the Carnatic and when he went to meet Qutbshah at Hyderabad in 1677, gave him a grand reception. He agreed to help him in his attack on Bijapur to reconquer Qutbshahi forts seized by Adilshah and even agreed to pay Shivaji 1 lakh *hun* annually. After the death of Shivaji, the same relations of friendship and amity continued with his son Shambhuji and Qutbshah never stopped his help to him.

As indicated above, Aurangzeb had come to the Deccan in 1682 determined to crush the Marathas and he wanted his Muslim vassals of Bijapur and Golkunda to collaborate with him. But when he discovered that their sympathies lay with the enemy, he decided to finish them first as a preliminary to the destruction of the Marathas. This was the chief cause for the invasion of Golkunda in 1685, although the immediate cause was the interception of a letter from Abul Hasan to his agent. The Emperor had sent his armies to invade Bijapur in 1685. And Abul Hasan decided to support Sikandar Adilshah by forming a joint front of all the Deccan states including the Marathas under Shambhuji. The letter ran as follows :—

"The Emperor is a great man, and has acted magnanimously upto this time, but now, finding Sikandar a helpless orphan, he has laid siege to Bijapur and pressed him hard. It is, therefore, necessary, that while the Bijapur army and Shambhuji with his countless hordes, are offering resistance from one side, I should, from this side, send 40,000 men under Khalilullah Khan to enter into the war. We shall then see on which front the Emperor can meet and repel his enemies."

As soon as the letter was intercepted, Aurangzeb directed Prince Shah Alam and Khan-i-Jahan to invade Golkunda and occupy Hyderabad. The army moved so slowly that it was suspected that Shah Alam had been purchased by a heavy bribe. But the army finally did reach Hyderabad and occupied it while Abul Hasan sought shelter in the fort of Golkunda. Abul Hasan now offered his apologies for his past conduct and sued for peace. His prayer was granted on condition that he paid one crore and twenty lakhs of rupees as arrears of tribute and indemnity for war, dismissed Madanna and Akanna and ceded the districts occupied by the imperial army.

After this treaty the Emperor employed all his strength against Bijapur and annexed it. This done, he turned once again to invade Golkunda. Khafi Khan says Causes of second invasion of Golkunda that the cause of invasion was Aurangzeb's former dissatisfaction against Qutbshah and his desire to put an end to the Qutbshahi dynasty as soon as an opportunity offered itself. But this does not contain the whole truth. It is true that the Emperor was dissatisfied with Qutbshah but the invasion was made on account of breach of terms of treaty of 1685. Abul Hasan continued to put off the dismissal of Madanna and Akanna although in March 1683 a group of exasperated nobles had them murdered and sent their heads to the Emperor. Abul Hasan had also been giving secret aid to Bijapur and the Marathas. What was worse, he did not even pay the stipulated war-indemnity. When pressed hard for payment, he told the imperial agent that he had no money but if the Emperor sent a teenager *Khwojasara* he would allow him to take away the ornaments on the person of the ladies in the *harem*. This was taken to be mere excuse for evading the payment. Hence his territory was invaded a second time.

Hyderabad was once more easily occupied. But the siege of Golkunda dragged on for a long time. The Shias in the imperial camp had a soft corner for Qutbshah and therefore did not exert themselves adequately. The fort on the other hand had a large stocks of essential supplies and munitions and was fitted with high calibre guns under whose deadly fire it was impossible to approach the city walls. Qutbshahi troops made occasional sorties and dislocated siege arrangements. But the iron will of

the Emperor refused to bend before any obstacles. To the force of arms was added the weight of seductive diplomacy and the lure of gold. The perseverance of the Emperor was finally rewarded when after a siege of seven months, treachery of an Afghan Qutbshahi general enabled the imperialists to enter the fort and occupy it. Abul Hasan was confined to the fort of Daulajatabad and a pension of Rs. 50,000/- a year was fixed for his maintenance. The Qutbshahi dynasty was deposed and the kingdom annexed to the empire. During the siege Abdul Razzak Lari fought with such exemplary valour and devotion that the Emperor was forced to remark that if Abul Hasan had had one more officer like him his freedom might never have been lost. He had single-handedly accounted for numerous deaths among the imperial troops as they forced their entry into the fort and he had stopped only when he had fainted away after receiving no less than seventy wounds on his body. The Emperor desired to enrol him among his *mansabdars* and promised to have him treated by eminent physicians. But he declined the offer. In his hour of adversity Abul Hasan also acted with kingly dignity and his whole tenor of life underwent a complete transformation.

The fall of Golkunda was in a sense inevitable. Aggressive Mughal imperialism could be resisted only by a united effort of the Deccan states. But the latter continued to quarrel among themselves all the time. The last two rulers of Golkunda were utterly unworthy. They could not keep the administration under their control. Faction, intrigue, dissension and political murders, therefore, became the order of the day. The people got so disgusted with this state of affairs that they heartily desired the end of this government. In the Mughal court there were many people who regarded deposition of a brother Muslim like the Qutbshah opposed to the principles of Islam specially when he had already offered his submission to the Emperor. With their support, Golkunda could have survived for long. But Abul Hasan's vices and his patronage of Madanna and support of the Marathas gave the Emperor the welcome excuse of saying that it was in the defence of Islam that he was invading the land. The power of the Emperor was great while the Qutbshahi nobles were selfish and treacherous and the Marathas were in no position to help him. That is why this dynasty came to an end. But the annexation of Golkunda did not prove an unmixed blessing for the empire. The destruction of Bijapur and Golkunda indirectly led to great anarchy in the south which proved beneficial to the Marathas in their war of independence. The Marathas, thus strengthened, ultimately smashed the empire to pieces.

Further Reading

1. *Cambridge History of India* Vol. III Chapters XIII, XVI & XVII.
2. *Cambridge History of India* Vol. IV Chapters V—X.
3. Smith—*Akbar the Great Mughal*, Chapter X.
4. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*, Chapters XI, XV, XVII-XXI.
5. Saksena—*History of Shahjahan of Delhi*, Chapters II, VI & VII.
6. Faruqi—*Aurangzeb and his Times*, Chapters XII-XV.
7. Sarkar—*A Short History of Aurangzeb*, Chapters XII-XIII.
8. Haig—*Historical Landmarks in the Deccan*.

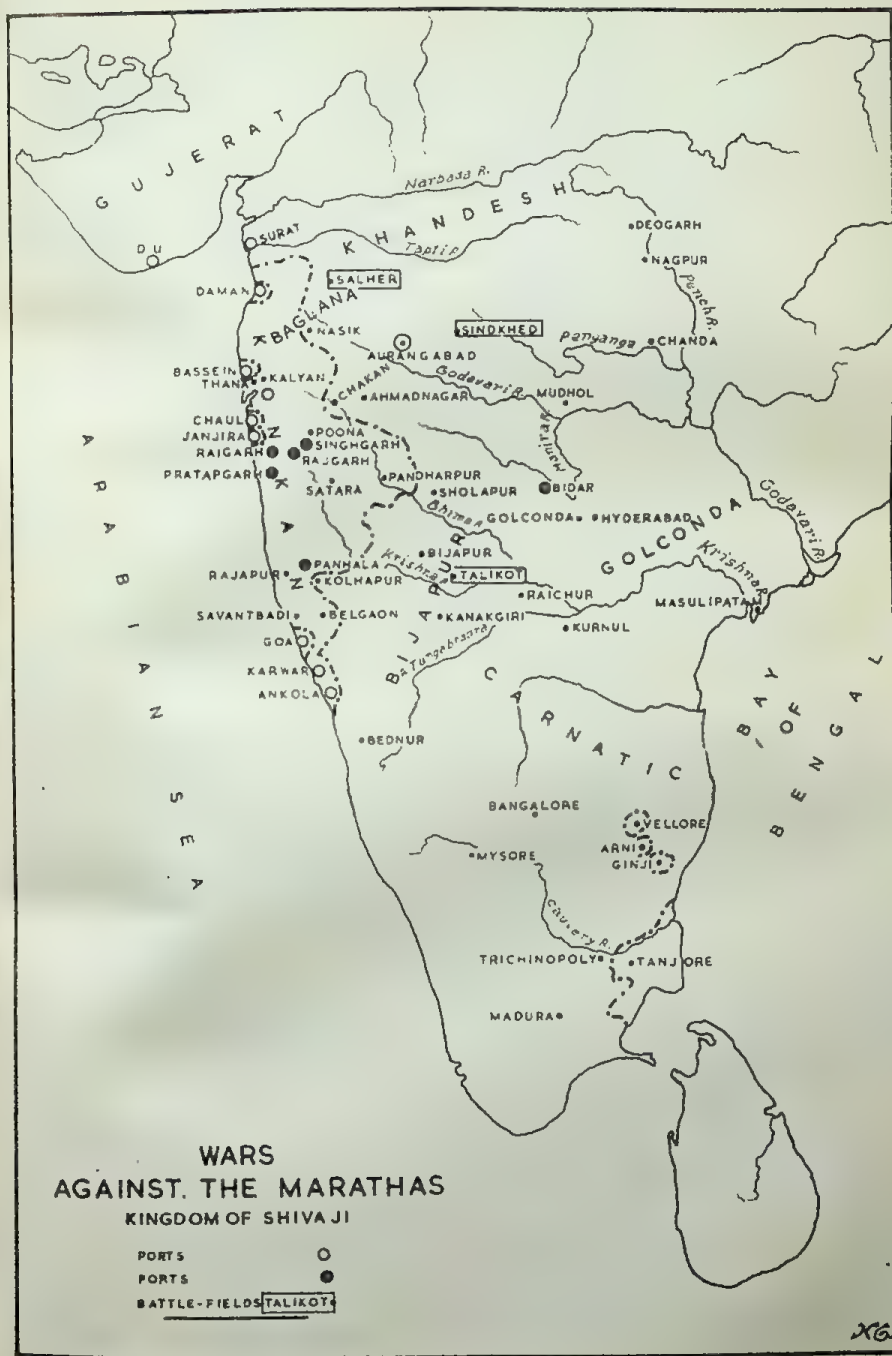
CHAPTER XI

CONQUEST OF THE DECCAN—WARS AGAINST THE MARATHAS

When the Turks established their power in northern India there were four principal Hindu Kingdoms in the south—the Former Hindu Kingdoms of the Deccan Yadavas of Devagiri, the Kakatiyas of Warangal, the Hoysalas of Dwarsamudra and the Kampli and the Pandyas of Madura. Besides these, there were many petty states which sometimes became tributary to them and at others tried to assert their independence. In 1294, Alauddin had first thought of invading the Deccan and within fifteen years of his first invasion, all the principal Hindu states of the Deccan and the far South had been obliged to accept his suzerainty and pay him tribute. Next started the process of eliminating older ruling dynasties and annexation of their territory to the Sultanate of Delhi which established its direct rule over them. This began in 1318 and continued upto 1327. Thus the ruling houses of the Yadavas and the Kakatiyas first lost their independence and then their political entity. The northern part of the Hoysala kingdom was also annexed to the Sultanate of Delhi and later the Sultans of Mabar occupied most of the Pandya kingdom and tried to put an end to the Hoysalas.

But this work of conquest and expansion was suddenly halted. Madhawa Vidyaranya, the Shankaracharya of Sringeri and his brothers inspired the people to stand up for the defence of Hindu religion and culture. Relations and descendants of the Kakatiyas and the Hoysalas assumed political leadership and tried to organise a revolution for the revival of Hindu power. Their joint efforts bore fruit in the establishment of the Vijayanagar kingdom. Thus the foundation of Turkish power in the south strengthened rather than destroyed the urge for a life and death struggle for the preservation of Hindu religion and culture. The Vijayanagar kingdom extended from the *Krishna* and the *Tungbhadra* to the far south and its rulers became zealous guardians of Hindu religion and culture. This kingdom lasted for about 200 years.

Its northern neighbour was the Bahmani kingdom ruled by Muslim Sultans. After a life of about a hundred and fifty years, it broke into five kingdoms each of which remained locked in struggle against Vijayanagar for practically seventy five years. Four of them then combined to destroy the city and kingdom of Vijayanagar beyond all recovery. But even after the disaster at



Talikota (1565), the memory of the kingdom of Vijayanagar remained enshrined in the hearts of the Hindu masses. A number of its governors and tributary chiefs established petty independent kingdoms of their own, some of which survived even the extinction of the Mughal dynasty. Numerous petty chiefs and Rajas kept Hindu political power alive in the land between the *Tapti* and the *Krishna* and particularly in the Konkan and the Mawal district. It is thus clear that the political importance of the Hindus and their passion for independence was far stronger and more widespread in the south than in the north.

The rulers of Gondwana also played a prominent part in Deccan politics but their geographical position was such that the history of Malwa and Bundelkhand, Bihar and Orissa exercised considerable influence on them. When after the annexation of Malwa, Akbar started maturing his plans for the expansion of his territory in other directions, his attention was directed towards Gondwana which was divided into many petty states, the most important of which was Garh Katanga, ruled by Raja Vir Narayan. His mother Rani Durgawati was a Chandel princess who after the death of her husband had managed its affairs so well that its people were happy and prosperous, its treasury full of gold and silver and its civil and military government highly efficient.

Akbar was a great imperialist and it was his desire for territorial aggrandisement which prompted his invasion of Gondwana in 1564. Asaf Khan delivered such a powerful attack that Durgawati failed to withstand it and, finally, lost her life in the defence of her kingdom. Garh Katanga was annexed to the empire and a *faujdar* was appointed for its government. Some years later, the post was offered to Rao Surjan Hada of Ranthambhor.

The descendants of Vir Narayan now made Chauragarh the centre of their power and became vassals of the emperor. In the reign of Shahjahan, Prem Narayan was the ruler of Chauragarh. His capital was the mainstay of his strength. In 1635, Jujhar Singh made an unprovoked attack on him and he sought protection from the Emperor. But the Emperor paid no heed to his entreaties so that the Raja was killed and the fort occupied by Jujhar Singh.

Later, in course of pursuit of Jujhar Singh, the Emperor sought to occupy the rest of Gondwana as well. There were two powerful Gond states south of the *Narbada*. One of these was Deogarh with its headquarters at Nagpur. In 1637, Deogarh was invaded and Nagpur occupied. But when the Raja agreed to pay an annual tribute his kingdom was restored to him.

After some time arrears of tribute began to accumulate so that it was invaded again in 1655 and 1667. The Raja of Deogarh apologised and agreed to pay 18 lakhs of rupees as indemnity and arrears of tribute. But he failed to keep his promise.

Hence it was once more invaded in 1669, and it was only after the Raja and his family had accepted Islam that his kingdom was restored to him. One of its later rulers was Bakhta Buland who extended the power of the Gonds considerably and started ruling almost like an independent prince, and even harried Aurangzeb when he was engaged in a war against the Marathas.

South of Deogarh lay the kingdom of Chanda. The Gond ruler of Chanda was always engaged in a constant struggle against his northern neighbour of Deogarh. In 1667, Chanda was also invaded along with Deogarh. The ruler of Chanda was so overawed that he agreed to pay an immediate indemnity of one crore of rupees and an annual tribute of 2 lakhs of rupees. Diler Khan realized practically three-fourth of the indemnity within two months before he left the kingdom. Henceforward Chanda also became a tributary state although it was not always regular in its payments.

The land called Maharashtra occupies an important place in the 17th and 18th century India. Since very early days Maharashtra was associated with powerful kingdoms but it jealously guarded its individuality and love of independence. It is difficult to define accurately the limits of Maharashtra because the Marathas migrated from the land of their ancestors far towards the north, south and the east in large numbers and there are numerous scholars who include all that land into Maharashtra which is now predominantly inhabited by the Marathi speaking people. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, Maharashtra comprises the modern districts of Nasik, Poona, Satara, Thana, Kolaba, Sawantwadi and portions of Ahmadnagar, Sholapur and Aurangabad. Sardesai likens Maharashtra to "a right angled triangle, of which one side is represented by the western coast-line from Daman to Karwar and the other from Daman straight east to Nagpur and Gondia. . . . The hypotenuse of this triangle would be an irregular line joining Gondia to Karwar and touching in its course the towns of Belgaum, Sholapur and Bidar".

Most of the original Maharashtra was a forest-clad hilly tract. The coastal region between the Ghats and the sea has adequate rainfall and good soil so that it has a rich crop of paddy, cocoanut, mango and palm which makes the people happy and prosperous; the inhabitants of this hilly and forest-clad regions have been obliged by nature to lead a life of adventure and toil. In the hilly regions, there are numerous spots where fine forts can be built, nature aiding the efforts of man in making them inaccessible and impregnable. The trees clustering round them provide a natural camouflage and conceal them from hostile vision so that they form a safe retreat in the hour of adversity and provide valuable centres for guerilla warfare. Here man has to wage a constant and hard struggle against nature to eke out a mere existence.

Abundance of wild game and their depredations made the Marathas skilled in chase and the use of arms. Many adopted fighting as a career and settled down wherever they found a lucrative employment. Thus the geographical condition of Maharashtra led to a dispersal of its people beyond its frontiers and has given them a distinctive stamp in habits and character. Nature made them a little rough and crude in social relations in-so-far that most of them love to live in isolated aloofness. They had little leisure to indulge in the luxury of contemplative imagination. Instead, they have been hard realists, simple and straightforward, industrious and self-possessed. Art for art's sake made no appeal to them, so that, even during their heyday they did nothing to develop painting or architecture. Since the days of Hiuen Tsang, they were known for gratitude to friends and defiance to enemies. Although they were on the whole kind to their subordinates and true to their pledges, the desire to undo the evil effects of Turkish domination engendered in them the qualities of intrigue, finesse and opportunism. They appeared neither very virile nor of impressive build but have been noted for their unswerving iron will and unique capacity for toilsome labour. Self-reliance and mental vigour was always their strong point and they possessed that enthusiasm and tact which enables one to get over his difficulties and maintain an equanimity of temper.

This peculiar geographical condition gave the Marathas a distinctive uniqueness. Their Marathi language and literature banded them into a cultural entity which imbibed and transcended all local dialects and made Marathi literature a common heritage of the people of Maharashtra as a whole. Their mutual goodwill, common ideals and attitudes was the inevitable result of the possession of a common regional language and the people of Maharashtra were brought closer together as a distinct cultural unit on account of the cementing influence of Marathi

It was through this common language that the saints and savants of Maharashtra tried to instil in its people a new energy and a fresh zeal. The saints and philosophers of Maharashtra beginning from Jnaneshwar, Hemadri and Chakradhar to Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas laid stress on the doctrine of *Bhakti* and equality of all human beings as the children of a common father in heaven. Some of them, for example, Chakradhar, Namadeva, Eknath etc., even tried to abolish the caste-system. Others accepted *caste* as a useful element in social organisation but on the spiritual plane rejected all claims of superiority based on the accident of birth and stressed the importance of purity of thought and conduct, sincerity and depth of emotion, of *bhakti* and passion for union with the divine. They popularised their ideas through songs pregnant with great devotional fervour. They translated *Bhagwadgita*, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharat* into Marathi and made

them accessible to all and sundry. They stressed the importance of pilgrimage to holy places and the *Vithoba* of Pandharpur soon became a symbol of unity for Maharashtra. The cumulative effect of all this was a sense of unity and cohesion. With this as the background was started the work of political regeneration. Here too, the lead was taken by saints and reformers. They impressed on the minds of their followers that it was the duty of every self-respecting individual to defend his religion and culture. With this end in view, they imported the need of unity, organisation and mutual cooperation and recommended acquisition of political experience and power. They popularised the exploits of their ancestors to instil into their mind the faith that they could surely overcome the enemies of their land and religion. The religious reformers of Maharashtra thus did not confine their activities to moral and spiritual regeneration alone but made it a religious obligation to acquire political power and social cohesion for the defence of religion. This led to a powerful wave of reform and regeneration and filled the people with a desire for success here and in the world thereafter.

Turkish domination over Maharashtra was first established in the 14th century and continued thereafter for over three hundred years under the Sultans of Delhi, the Bahmanids and the succession states. The founders of these dynasties were foreigners and utter strangers to conditions in the south. Hence they were obliged to retain local men in their employ and to adopt a conciliatory attitude. The village organisation remained virtually unaffected and the Patels, Deshmukhs and Desais retained their dominant position in rural politics. As for the Maratha soldier, he had won such wide renown that he could not be refused a place in the armies of the Deccani Sultans. They developed *bargigiri* a new method of warfare now described as guerilla warfare. As indicated earlier Malik Ambar was the first to exploit this quality of the Maratha soldier to great advantage. In subsequent wars between the Mughal Emperors and the Deccani Sultans, we constantly hear of the Emperor suffering great losses on account of the harassing raids by the Deccani guerillas. The Marathas took the lion's share in these exploits though soldiers of other nationalities were also employed. Consequently, the Marathas freely acquired wide administrative and military experience, and some of them like Murari Pandit, Madanna and Akanna even rose to be Chief Ministers and principal counsellors of the sultans of Deccan. As the Marathas occupied the higher civil and military posts in almost all the states of the Deccan, their political influence was never insignificant. But they had no independent state of their own, and were so incapable of putting up a successful opposition to the religious persecution by the sultans of the Deccan.

This deficiency was made good by the Bhonslas. They were connected with the Jadhavas of Sindkhed and the Ghorpads of Mudhol. The Ghorpads were in possession of copies of certain *farmans* which indicated that they were the descendants of the Sisodiyas of Mewar but many scholars regard them as forgeries and consider it unsafe to base any conclusions on them. At the time of the coronation of Shivaji a genealogy was framed to connect him with the Sisodiyas, but a large number of the Bhonslas had been pursuing agriculture as a profession and so were not counted among the higher races of the Kshatriyas. The struggle between Shivaji and the Meres of Javali who claimed to have descended from Chandragupta Maurya was based on this very issue. It is, therefore, difficult to assert with certitude that the Bhonslas were connected with any ancient ruling dynasty.

Babaji Bhonsle, the great grandfather of Shivaji was an ordinary Patel. He had two sons named Maloji and Vithoji. Contemporary literature speaks of them as 'Raja' but as Sardesai has correctly pointed out they cannot on that account be regarded as Rajas. The two brothers settled down near Daulatabad and acquired Patelship of Verul (Ellora) and a few other villages. They later entered the service of Lakhji Jadhav Rao, a Nizamshahi noble and according to one version Maloji secured the post of *Pratihari* (Keeper of the gate). Once, on the occasion of *Holi* (Spring festival), Maloji accompanied by his son Shahji went to meet his master, who on noticing Shahji playing with his daughter Jijabai humorously remarked what a fine couple they made. Maloji regarded this as tantamount to an alliance and pressed for a formal confirmation which incensed Jadhava Rao so much that he dismissed him from his service and drove him away.

So on after, Maloji luckily discovered a hidden treasure which he utilized to raising a force of one thousand soldiers and started on the career of organised brigandage in collaboration with Nimbalkar of Phaltan and gradually acquired fame, so that the Nizamshah enrolled him as one of his nobles and assigned to him the *jagir* of Poona and Supa. This steep rise in the fame and position of Maloji induced Jadhava Rao to marry Jijabai to Shahji thus improving his status still more. Maloji and Vithoji now spent a part of their income on the renovation of temples and the construction of tanks which won them great popularity and their fame travelled far and wide. On Maloji's death, Vithoji succeeded to his brother's rank and position at the Nizamshahi court and on the demise of the latter Shahji acquired his father's post and *jagir* and became the acknowledged head of the family, and, although some of the sons of Vithoji entered the service of the Mughal Emperor there was perhaps no open rupture between them and Shahji.

Among the ancestors of Shivaji, Maloji was the first to acquire military distinction for his family. But it was Shahji who particularly raised its prestige. Shahji acquired practical experience of war under his father Maloji and Malik Ambar. It was in course of the wars of Malik Ambar that he learnt how a small force could exploit local topography to inflict defeats on much larger armies by the use of guerilla tactics. When Jahangir started seducing Nizamshahi nobles by the lure of gold and office, a number of Maratha leaders went over to him. But Shahji remained loyal to the States of Deccan and fought against the Mughals on the side of Malik Ambar. In 1628, he invaded Khandesh and plundered at will the imperial subjects. When the collapse of the Nizamshah appeared imminent, he tried to seize the land between Junnar and Ahmadnagar and in 1630 he submitted for a time to Shahjahan in order to strengthen his position. But when Shahjahan, in an attempt to win over Fath Khan, adopted a course prejudicial to the interests of Shahji, the latter became alienated for life. In 1633, he set up a puppet Nizamshah and started a war against the Emperor in collusion with the Adilshah. Having successfully defied the arms of the Emperor for about three years, he finally stopped fighting by surrendering all the Nizamshah forts to the Emperor while accepting a post under the Adilshah he secured from him in *jagir* the entire tract from Chakan to Indapur in the Poona district. But his scene of action soon changed, for the Adilshah sent him on an expedition towards the south where he secured for himself a *jagir* big enough to make him count among the principal Hindu nobles of the Adilshah. Shahji, now settled down with a number of Maharashtrian Brahmins and Marathas in this *jagir* and acquired great fame and renown not only as a capable administrator, but also, as a patron of arts and letters.

But when Shahji's son Shivaji shot into sudden and glamorous prominence, Shahji suffered an eclipse and all eyes turned towards his illustrious son. Shivaji was born in 1627. It is said that for sometime relations between Shahji and Jijabai were rather cold and strained. This is attributed to the defection of Jijabai's father to the side of Jahangir in the latter's attempt to destroy the Nizamshahi dynasty while Shahji and his uncle Vithoji were loyal to the Nizamshah. But it is wrong to assert that Shahji did not provide for a decent and comfortable living for Jijabai and her children. Jijabai had a number of children but only two reached manhood. Shambhaji the elder of the two remained constantly with Shahji and between 1637 to 1654 acted as a useful deputy to his father at Bangalore and Kanakgiri. Shambhaji was deliberately killed, in course of a war, when it is alleged Afzal Khan deliberately refused to send him reinforcements.

Shivaji was the younger of the two. The early years of Shivaji were a period of stress and storm because his father was engaged in an unequal fight against the Mughal Emperor, who was determined to employ all possible means to bring him to his knees. By the treaty of 1636, Shahji had promised to leave Maharashtra. Hence the management of his *jagir* in Poona was entrusted to Jijabai assisted by Dadaji Kondadeva. About the year 1640, Shivaji was formally appointed his father's deputy. The terms of the treaty of 1636 and his subsequent success in the wars in the Carnatic induced Shahji to spend the last twenty eight years of his life in Bangalore and Kanakgiri. During this period he met Jijabai only twice. That is why the fable of estrangement between Shahji and Jijabai got currency and it was widely rumoured that Shahji did not take due care of his son Shivaji.

During Shahji's absence in the south, it was Jijabai who was principally responsible for the education and upbringing of Shivaji. Jijabai and Tukabai (another wife of Shivaji's education and training Shahji) probably lost no love between them and the former could not agree to entrust her young son to the care of a step-mother. On the other hand, Shahji had to provide for the satisfactory management of his Poona *jagir*. These circumstances deprived Shivaji of the opportunities for paternal guidance and control. Jijabai was a proud lady with a religious bent of mind. She longed to see her son grow up into the pattern of the great heroes of the past and wished him develop into a young man of spotless character, virile constitution and noble fame. She did her utmost to mould her son in the light of these high ideals. Shivaji's sole companion in the family was his mother, hence, he felt strongly drawn towards her and his affection for her bordered on adoration. He tried to keep her happy and contented and a strong feeling in him which soon developed into a faith was that her blessings had greater efficacy for him than even divine grace. Thus Jijabai had a predominant influence in the development of her son's personality.

But the formal education of Shivaji began only when Dadaji Kondadeva became his guardian-tutor. He did not evince much interest in acquiring bookish knowledge, but acquired high proficiency in wrestling, swimming, hunting, horsemanship and the use of arms. He picked up the rudiments of government when still a mere boy, for Dada always kept him in the forefront as the real master of the people and kept him by his side while administering justice, restoring law and order or attending to the routine affairs of Government.

Shivaji's public career formally began after his marriage with Saibai in or about 1640. He was now appointed as his

father's deputy in the Poona *jagir*. It was at this time that he went to meet his father at Bangalore in the company of his mother and Kondadeva. When he was returning back to Poona, Shahji sent with him elephants, horses and some capable officers who rose to be ministers in Shivaji's *Swarajya*. Shyamraj Nilkantha Ranjhekar became the *Peshwa*; Balkrishna Hanumante, *Majmuadar*; Sonaji Pant, Dabir and Raghunath Ballal Korde, *Sabnis*. Besides these able men, Shivaji himself secured the services of Tukoji Maratha and offered him the office of *Sarnaubat*. On his way back from Bangalore he went to Bijapur and attracted notice by not saluting the Adilshah in the usual Islamic manner. This breach of etiquette was forgiven only on account of his young age and inexperience.

On his return from Bijapur, Shivaji took a round of his *jagir*, meeting the people freely wherever he went. He gathered round himself promising Maval youths and spent his time in their company hunting and strolling, pursuing sport or adventure, as the occasion demanded. In those days there were numerous disputes about land-proprietorship and succession to property and, the only method of settling them in Maharashtra was the application of force. Might is right was the universal principle. Shivaji put an end to this state of chaos. Dadaji had considerably improved the condition of the *jagir* by encouraging agriculture, rounding up all bad characters and establishing the rule of law. As Shivaji grew up, he increasingly put his support to the maintenance and extension of this policy. This soon earned him a wide reputation for impartial justice and, not only that, he also had the capacity to enforce his judgment on even the most recalcitrant. This led to the establishment of such peace and security that Shivaji secured universal praise and loyalty.

Shivaji's next step was to make this contented population instrumental in realizing his aims. His charming personality and native capacity for leadership secured for him numerous youthful zealous supporters. Among them special mention must be made of Gomaji Naik, Yesaji Kank, Tanaji Malusre and Bajirao Jedhe. Shivaji utilised their enthusiasm by leading them into plundering raids against the Adilshahi officers and unfriendly Deshmukhs. The success in these raids, raised the morale of his followers and emboldened him to address them thus:

"Why remain content with the gifts conferred by foreigners, or with our paternal acquisitions only? We are Hindus: this whole country is ours, and yet it is occupied and held by the Muslims. They desecrate our temples, break our idols, plunder our wealth, convert our countryman forcibly to their

religion, kill cows openly; we will suffer this treatment no more. We possess strength in our arms. Let us draw our sword in defence of our sacred religion, liberate our native country and acquire new lauds and wealth by our own efforts.... If we undertake this sacred task, God will surely help us....."

He exhorted them to give up all thought of service under the Adilshah or the Emperor and to aspire for a life of freedom and independence. He impressed on their mind that his father as the regent of the Nizamshah had acquired land worth about 21 lakh *huns* a year but the hostility of Shahjahan had compelled him to part with all that and engage in the service of the Adilshah who had seized most of that *jagir* and kept it for himself. It was, therefore, a natural duty of the Maratha young men to emancipate that land from enemy control and establish their rule over it. It had once belonged to the Nizamshah but after the dissolution of the Nizamshahi dynasty, the land should, in justice, revert to the local Hindu leaders rather than fall to the share of the Emperor or the anti-Hindu Adilshah. An attempt to recover that land was not an act of rebellion but of assertion of one's rights. It was fulfilment of a solemn obligation to liberate the motherland.

Having secured their adherence to his aims, Shivaji first occupied the Maval territory and put down all recalcitrant

Deshmukhs. He next seized Sinhagarh in 1643 in bold defiance of the authority of the Adilshah. But when the latter became critical

Early successes of his actions, he sent him word that his operations against the disaffected Adilshahi officers were purely of a defensive character and that their suppression would only strengthen the authority of the Sultan. Thus, on the one hand, he loudly protested his loyalty to the Sultan and on the other expelled his officers and seized one fort after another till Chakan, Purandar, Baramati, Torna, Supa, Javli *etc.* passed into his hands to form the nucleus of the '*Hindwi Swarajya*' in Maharashtra. At Torna and Javli he secured a large treasure which considerably helped his subsequent rise to power. Shivaji got this golden opportunity only on account of Muhammad Adilshah's illness (1646-1656). He also strengthened his position by winning over some powerful nobles at the Adilshahi court by offering them huge bribes.

Shivaji had not yet acquired much power when he learnt that his father had been thrown into prison for the sins of his son. Shahji was even forced to write to Shivaji that he should surrender Sinhagarh to the Sultan to effect his release from prison. On receipt of this letter, Shivaji treated the Adilshahi agents with great respect and consideration but at the same time secretly sought the intervention of Shahjahan through the mediation of his son Murad, the then Viceroy of Deccan. This took

place in 1648-1649. Finding Shahjahan deaf to his appeal, he complied with the orders of the Adilshah and Shahji was released from prison on the occasion of the birth of a son to the Adilshah. Protracted deterioration in the health of the Adilshah and consequent squabbles among his nobles to acquire more power for themselves proved a boon both to Shahji and his son, Shivaji. Both father and son utilized this period to acquire more and more power in their respective spheres. This lasted upto 1656. During this period, Shivaji acquired so much power that he started behaving like an independent prince. He used a royal seal of his own, appointed ministers, held a court and made the newly built fort of Rajgarh his headquarters.

The year 1656 proved momentous in the history of the Deccan. Aurangzeb fixed the details of campaigns for further conquests just in this year. Fortunately for him, the

A change in the policy of Shivaji

Adilshah died the same year and the problem of succession provided an opportunity for

Mughal intervention. Mir Jumla also entered the service of the Emperor the same year and the end of the Deccani sultanates seemed imminent. Shivaji had to adjust his policy accordingly. In the changed circumstances, Shivaji knew that the Deccan states were weak and so degenerated that occupation of their territory by successful wars was comparatively easy. Nor did he have any delusions about the intentions of the Mughal Emperor and realized full well that if he intended founding an independent Maratha kingdom he must be prepared for a fight against the Mughal Emperor. At the same time Shivaji was also conscious of his inability to antagonise the Emperor immediately. He, therefore, fixed his plans with great care and circumspection. He fraternised with Muslim states of the Deccan and in collaboration with them tried to stand up as the first line of defence against imperial infiltration of the Deccan. He avoided encroaching on the territory of the Deccan states and seized only distant districts which had virtually renounced allegiance to them. To arrest the growth of imperial power, he took recourse to guerilla tactics supported by an astute diplomacy. Imperial agents and commanders were not always honest, industrious and vigilant. He tried to lull them into inactivity by offers of gold while by well-planned military coups he continued extending his sphere of influence. He always responded to the call of Bijapur and Golkunda for assistance against the Emperor and tried to secure lasting benefit for himself in the bargain. Between 1677-1680 he almost succeeded in bringing Bijapur and Golkunda under his effective control, but as we shall presently see, the plans finally miscarried. It is, thus clear, that after 1656 the principal aim of Shivaji was to counteract the Mughal expansion in the Deccan and to build up *Hindupati Padshahi* by founding an independent kingdom in the Konkan add the Desha.

It was Adilshah who first tried to curb the power of Shivaji. But after the death of Muhammad Adilshah, control over Relations with Bijapur: Death of Afzal Khan (1659) Government passed largely into the hands of the Queen Dowager, Bari Saheba. She first tried to set the Emperor against Shivaji and when the war of succession neutralised all Mughal activity in the Deccan, she started operations against all disaffected nobles. Just then Afzal Khan was sent against Shivaji at the head of ten thousand soldiers. According to Sarkar, she had advised Afzal Khan to avoid an open rupture because she knew that Shivaji had a following of 60,000 devoted soldiers who were prepared to stake their lives in his service and, had therefore, suggested extermination of Shivaji by a well-planned ruse. A letter from Revington to the East India Company in England states that Bari Saheba had "counselled him to pretend friendship" for Shivaji. According to Persian chroniclers, the aim of Afzal Khan was to secure the submission of Shivaji and to carry him if possible, as a prisoner to Bijapur. Maratha historians refer to Afzal's military successes and persecution of the Hindus. According to Manucci he bore upon Shivaji at such tremendous speed that the latter was forced to shrink back into the hilly regions. Notwithstanding his true intentions in the initial stages, Afzal Khan tried to strike terror by rapid movement and wanton cruelty to the people on the way. He then halted at Wai which brought one chapter of this episode to a close.

Now came the turn of diplomacy. Afzal Khan could well believe that Shivaji would be overawed into submission by his glorious military record and his success against Shivaji himself. He, therefore, sent Krishnaji Bhaskar to impress on the mind of Shivaji, that as a friend of his father Shahji, the Khan was a genuine well-wisher of Shivaji, and that, if he offered his submission and waited on him, he would intercede with the Adilshah in his favour and secure him a free pardon and confirmation in his *jagir*. The spies of Shivaji were no less active. He wanted to have a correct measure of the strength of Afzal Khan and to mobilise his forces rapidly to meet force with force. But he was not anxious for a showdown. If diplomacy could avert war he would have been happy to do so. But he was averse to meeting Afzal Khan in his camp. Events now moved fast and their cumulative effect was, that Shivaji became all the more suspicious about the true intentions of Afzal Khan while Shivaji's spies informed him that Afzal Khan was not friendly at heart. Even Krishnaji Bhaskar in a secret interview with Shivaji confirmed the suspicion when Shivaji made a successful appeal to his religious sentiments. Jijabai regarded him as the murderer of Shambhaji and was stoutly opposed to having any faith in his friendly gestures. Afzal's past record was against him. In 1639, he had encompassed the murder of

Kasturi Ranga in a similar assurance of friendship and in 1557, he had felt no scruples in securing the murder of Khan Muhammed. His bonafides therefore could not be trusted. He had destroyed the Bhawani Temple at Tuljapur along with many lesser shrines. Fraternisation with such a person ran counter to the avowed aims of Shivaji and could seriously compromise his reputation as the defender of the Hindu faith. Simultaneously, Shivaji was also conscious of the fact that a fight against such a powerful adversary equipped with a strong force of artillery was fraught with serious danger. He therefore decided to exploit the alleged goodwill of Afzal Khan to the maximum advantage. The plan of action fixed by him received the approval of Jijabai and according to Maratha historians, Goddess Bhawani appeared in a dream to exhort him not to let Afzal Khan escape alive.

Moro Fingle and Netaji Palkar were ordered to converge rapidly on Pratapggarh. At the same time, he sent a message to Afzal Khan that he was unable to muster courage to meet him at Wai but if the venue of the meeting was fixed near Pratapggarh and the Khan gave him an assurance of personal security and forgiveness for his faults, he would wait on him to offer his apologies in person. Shivaji instructed his envoy Gopinath to use all his resources to secure acceptance of these terms by the Khan. The envoy succeeded in his mission. A narrow path pierced the forest between Wai and Pratapggarh and Afzal Khan rode up and halted at a distance of a mile from Pratapggarh at the foot of the hill on the crest of which the fort stood. Almost half-way between the fort and the camp of Afzal Khan a convenient spot was selected where Shivaji put up a right royal *shamiana* (tent) for the reception of the Khan. Gopinath was then sent to bring Afzal Khan to the meeting place. Shivaji put on a dress that carefully conceal the steel armour and helmet and although according to the etiquette of those days, he could not carry arms on his person he wore the *Baghnakha* (tiger-claw) in his left hand and concealed the *bichhuwa* (Scorpion like dagger) in the sleeve of his right arm. He appointed Jijabai to carry on the government in the event of his death or imprisonment and chalked out the policy she should then follow. The saintly mother blessed his enterprise and Shivaji invoked the benedictions of the Bhawani before he started for the meeting. He was accompanied by two expert fencers Jiva Mahala and Shambhuji Kavji. Coming out of the fort, he waited for the Khan to arrive. Afzal Khan started for the meeting riding a palanquin and accompanied by a thousand musketeers. But Gopinath protested against this, saying, that Shivaji might be frightened away by the sight of this force so that the meeting might never take place. Afzal Khan, therefore, left the musketeers behind and like Shivaji took only two attendants one of whom was Sayyad Banda, a fine swordsman, was

a host in himself. When Shivaji came up and offered his salutations to him, the Khan stood up and held him in a close embrace. This was apparently an exhibition of graciousness, but it is difficult to say with accuracy, what his real motive was. Maratha historians who have unblushingly spoken of Shivaji's murders and treacheries and who even in the case of this interview assert, that Shivaji had made all necessary preparations to meet treachery by counter-treachery, state that Afzal Khan, confident of overpowering Shivaji and his attendants by his own and Banda's superior might, started throttling Shivaji to death with his left hand while with the right he tried to thrust his sword into his groin. After this, things moved with such lightning rapidity that it is difficult to convey the appropriate effect in words. Shivaji thrust the *baghnakha* in to Afzal's belly and tore it open, and as his stranglehold relaxed as a result of the wound, Shivaji made a deep thrust with the *bichhuwa*. The Khan cried out "Treachery, treachery" and the body-guards on both sides rushed up to aid their masters. Banda delivered such a powerful sword-cut on Shivaji's head that but for the steel cap he would have been cut into two and met with certain death. But Jiva struck Banda and severed his right arm from his body while Shivaji taking another sword from Jiva defended himself. With a second stroke Jiva chopped off the head of Banda while Shambhuji cut off the head of Afzal Khan. A previously agreed signal was now sounded and Shivaji's men streamed out of the forest to surprise Bijapuri troops and had a great kill. Shivaji's victory was complete and he secured a large booty consisting of the whole artillery, quantities of ammunition, 65 war-elephants, 4000 horses, 1200 camels, 10 lakh rupees in cash and a lot of other material. This raised the morale of Shivaji's troops much higher and his fame resounded throughout Maharashtra.

Faruqi accuses Shivaji of treacherously trapping Afzal Khan and perpetrating a base murder. Contemporary persian chroniclers and foreign travellers like Manucci have also expressed a similar opinion. But it is impossible to absolve Afzal Khan of all guilt. Faruqi says that if Afzal Khan had intended treachery he would neither have left his troops behind nor kept quite mum over it even in his own camp. As against it, it may be pointed out that Afzal Khan did not know about the presence of Shivaji's troops because they had made a stealthy march and taken cover in the dense forest. Unaware of the presence of these troops, it was not impossible for him to hope for success against Shivaji in a personal encounter. His attendant Banda alone could account for any two adversaries. Hence, the presence of Shivaji's attendants also, could cause him no worry. Then there were the palanquin bearers who could render some assistance. A little away from them were the one thousand musketeers, and the rest of the army lay encamped within less than a mile.

These soldiers could well reach the meeting-place before Shivaji's men from inside the fort could reach that spot. Afzal Khan was deceived because both Krishnaji Bhaskar and Gopinath gave him the impression that Shivaji had been terribly frightened. If he had even the least suspicion of treachery, he would have certainly been more cautious. It would, therefore, perhaps be nearer the truth to say that Afzal Khan had decided to meet Shivaji only with evil intentions and had made necessary arrangements for an easy success. But he did not know that Shivaji had got scent of his motives and had made plans, which, even in the event of his death would ensure the destruction of Afzal Khan and his army. Afzal Khan was deceived because of three reasons : (1) his personal vanity, (2) defection of his envoy to the enemy and (3) presence of a dense forest near the fort of Pratapgarh which provided a safe cover for the Maratha soldiers. He was thus caught in his own trap and killed.

After the death of Afzal Khan, the Marathas invaded the Konkan and the Kolhapur region and seized the fort of Panhala and the adjoining region. Ali Adilshah now sent another army which recovered the fort of Panhala and gave a hot chase to Shivaji. Ali now collaborated with Shayasta Khan, the Mughal Viceroy, but when this too did not yield much fruit he directed Shahji in 1662-1663 to go to Shivaji and wean him away from the path he had chosen. On Shahji's exhortation, Shivaji agreed not to encroach on Bijapur territory as long as the Adilshah did not bother him. He also agreed to make a common cause with Deccan states in their opposition to Aurangzeb. After this there was no serious conflict between Shivaji and State of Bijapur although in 1673 he recaptured the fort of Panhala and during 1677-1680 also seized the forts in Adilshahi possession which had formerly belonged to the Qutbshah.

After 1660, Shivaji encountered great opposition from the side of Aurangzeb. During the reign of Shahjahan, Shivaji had attacked Mughal territory for the first time in 1656 when Aurangzeb was engaged in Relations with the Mughal Emperor a war against the Qutbshah, but his fault had been overlooked because of the imminence of the war of succession and Aurangzeb's preoccupation with Bijapur. But between 1657-1659, Shivaji's power had increased so inordinately that Aurangzeb gave the first priority in his Deccan politics to the destruction of his power.

In 1660, Shayasta Khan was appointed the Viceroy of the Deccan. As soon as he reached the Deccan he entered into an alliance with Bijapur for the extermination of Shivaji. They made a vigorous attack on Shivaji and occupied Poona, Chakan and Kalyan. This considerably reduced the power of Shivaji but

Shayasta Khan
(1660-1663)

in 1663 Shivaji was able to surprise him in his own residence and Shayasta Khan thanked his stars that he had been able to escape alive only with the loss of his fingers. This, once more rehabilitated the credit of Shivaji.

Aurangzeb felt so disgusted with the discomfiture of his maternal uncle that he packed him off to Bengal and appointed in his place prince Muazzam who was soon followed by Raja Jay Singh. Before Jay Singh reached the Deccan, Shivaji raided Surat in 1664 and plundered it at will. As a retaliation for the sufferings of his own subjects during the recent war, he set fire to thousands of houses in Surat. The booty captured amounted to almost a crore of rupees.

When Shivaji returned from this campaign, he tried to strengthen and reorganise his forces because he had to be prepared for a fresh Mughal offensive. Raja Jay Singh, the new Viceroy, was in a sense the ablest among the Mughal commanders, for he combined with military talents high diplomatic acumen. His knowledge of Turki, Persian, Urdu and Rajasthani added to his habitual urbanity stood him in great stead in dominating friends and foes alike. As soon as he arrived in the Deccan, he tried to induce Bijapur to attack Shivaji. He next laid siege to Purandar and deputed another force to sack and terrorise Maratha lands. When it became impossible to hold on Purandar any longer, Shivaji opened negotiations for peace because a large number of Maratha leaders had their families lodged inside that fort and it was the duty of Shivaji to protect their life and honour.

Shivaji waited on Jay Singh to fix up the terms of peace, which has come to be known as the treaty of Purandar (June 1665). Shivaji agreed to surrender to the

Treaty of Purandar 1665 Emperor 23 forts with an annual revenue of 4 lakh *huns* while the Emperor recognized Shivaji's authority over 12 forts including Rajgarh bearing a revenue of one lakh *huns* a year. Shivaji promised to supply for imperial service 5000 soldiers under his son Shambhuji and the Emperor agreed to assign a suitable *jagir* for their maintenance. Shivaji declined to accept any *mansab* but promised to fight on behalf of the Emperor whenever demanded. There were some secret clauses in the treaty as well, which provided for Shivaji's participation in the war against Bijapur on the understanding that the Emperor would allow him, in the event of the disintegration of Bijapur, to capture and retain its territory in the Konkan and Balaghat worth 4 and 5 lakhs *huns* a year respectively in consideration of payment of 40 lakh *huns* to the Emperor by Shivaji in 13 instalments.

Shivaji accordingly joined in the war against Bijapur. But Jay Singh wanted that he should go to Agra and enter into a permanent alliance with the Emperor. Shivaji

Journey to Agra (1666) was loth to agree to this because he had no faith in Aurangzeb. But Jay Singh assured him of complete personal security and deputed his own son Rama Singh to look after him. Shivaji was finally induced to meet the Emperor in his own capital. May be he wanted to acquire a first-hand knowledge of conditions in the north and to establish friendly contacts with nobles in the Mughal court. Besides, even though he might not have been sanguine about securing the viceroyalty of the Deccan, he did hope to obtain imperial assistance in strengthening his western frontier by seizing the island of Janjira, then in possession of the Sidis. Shivaji was accompanied by his son, principal chiefs and 4000 soldiers.

Jay Singh had assured him that the Emperor would certainly accept his status as a vassal prince, restore his territory and assign to him a high *mansab*. But when Shivaji appeared at the Mughal court, he was made to stand in the ranks of *panjazaris* and, the Emperor apparently took no notice of him. Shivaji fidgeted at this neglect, but when he discovered that he was among the *mansabdars* of 5,000 to which his young son Shambhu and servant Netaji belonged, he could bear it no longer and without waiting for the orders of the Emperor walked away and sat down at a spot close by. Aurangzeb sent Ram Singh and two other nobles to pacify Shivaji and sent him a *khilat* which he was to put on before he came for audience with the Emperor. Shivaji refused to comply, saying, that they might kill him or throw him into prison but he would neither put on the *khilat* nor accept a *mansab* nor have an audience with the Emperor after such humiliation. When Aurangzeb was informed of his intransigence he asked Ram Singh to take him away to his residence and pacify him there. Shivaji protested against such treatment and he wrote to the Emperor that he would prefer death to such humiliation and prayed for permission to return to the south. Aurangzeb could not permit him to depart in that frame of mind and he instructed the *Kotwal* to post a picket to keep watch over Shivaji's residence. Meanwhile, he enquired from Jay Singh what promises he had made on behalf of the Emperor. Jay Singh wrote back in reply that he had extended no promises but had assured him on oath of his personal security.

Shivaji was now in a dangerous predicament. But he was not the man to bow before a storm. He tried to curry favour with the Emperor and prayed for an assignment of duty in any quarter the Emperor desired, so that he might furnish proof of his loyalty to him. He obtained imperial permission to send away his contingent to Maharashtra and while bidding farewell

to his closest associates impressed on them what they must do to effect his release and return home. The anti-Jay Singh group at the court, in the meantime was exerting all its influence to secure chastisement of Shivaji. Those who had suffered at his hands also raised their voice against him. They even included the ladies of the *harem* such as Jahanara and the wife of Shayasta Khan. The Emperor was deliberating upon a safe means of assassinating him but his hands were tied down by the fear of revolt by Jay Singh and other Hindu nobles. Shivaji now won over some nobles by offering them rich presents and learnt from them how matters stood. He therefore busied himself with devising means of escape. He simulated illness and initiated a course of public charities as an aid to his quick recovery. Finally, both Shivaji and Shambhuji carefully concealed themselves in baskets of sweets and went out unnoticed. To help in the deception, Hirji lay down in Shivaji's bed covered from head to foot but exposing one of his hands bearing Shivaji's gold bangle. Having lain like that for 20 hours, he too went out asking the guards on duty not to make any noise lest Shivaji might be disturbed in his sleep. The time, thus gained, enabled Shivaji to effect his return to Maharashtra via Mathura, Allahabad, Kashi and Gaya. The Emperor ordered all possible measures to capture him but failed to discover the route taken by Shivaji. The credulous even began whispering that he was a master magician and that it was by magic that he had entered the house of Shayasta Khan and had now effected his escape despite a heavy guard. The Emperor put all the blame on Jay Singh, punished his son and recalled him from the Deccan, but he died on the way probably as a result of poisoning by the Emperor.

Shivaji had appointed Jijabai as his regent during the period of his absence from the Deccan and had also left detailed instructions for all his subordinates, so that, there may be no difficulty in keeping the affairs in a trim state. But in spite of that, he was in no position to initiate hostilities against the Emperor immediately after his return from Agra. The Emperor too could not take the offensive against him because of failure in Bijapur and disturbances on the north-western frontier. Besides, Prince Muazzam the new Viceroy was indolent and ease loving while his deputy Jaswant Singh was friendly to Shivaji. Hence a formal peace was concluded in 1665. The Emperor restored to him the fort of Chakan and recognized his title as the Raja. Shambhuji once more became a *panjha-zari mansabdar* and Shivaji sent under him 5,000 troops for imperial service in return for a *jagir* in Berar.

By 1669, Shivaji consolidated his position in the Konkan and reorganised his internal administration. The Emperor sought

to imprison Shambhuji and the leading Maratha generals.

Revival of war
against the Emperor
(1670)

He was also guilty of certain other acts which offended Shivaji and obliged him to revive hostilities afresh. His attacks proved so hard and telling that the imperial agents got totally unnerved and fled abandoning the forts held by them. Thus Shivaji reacquired many of his lost forts.

The Emperor had also sent Diler Khan to the Deccan in order to exert greater pressure on Shivaji. But this did more harm than good and, finally, things came to such a head that Diler Khan proceeded to the north without reference to Muazzam and the latter gave him a hot pursuit. Meanwhile Shivaji raided Surat a second time and captured a booty valued at 66 lakhs of rupees. After this second sack, Surat was so haunted by the fear of Maratha raiders that its prosperity and revenue to the state rapidly declined.

Between 1670 and 1680 Shivaji acquired more and more power and all the plans of the enemy were defeated. During this period, Prataprao Gujar and Moro Pingle specially distinguished themselves among Maratha captains of war and earned remarkable victories by their efficient leadership and Shivaji though pitted against such able Mughal commanders as Daud Khan, Mahabat Khan, Bahadur Khan, and Diler Khan was always able to hold his own.

A reference to the principal successes of Shivaji may alone suffice. In 1670, Prataprao was sent to invade Khandesh and Berar and levied a ransom worth many crores of rupees. In 1671 the fort of Salher was occupied while in 1672 the imperial commanders were forced to yield ground and fall back. This was the first occasion when Shivaji's troops defeated the imperial army in an open engagement, captured a number of high *mansabdars* and slaughtered thousand of imperial soldiers. The Emperor felt greatly humiliated and wrote to Diler Khan and others in this wise: "Why did you not die on the battlefield to avoid this disgrace to your master? Why do you live and report to me this dismal news?" Sabhasad says that the Emperor grieved so sorely that he uttered in despair, "I should rather die than live to see such results." The same year, the states of Jawhar and Ramnagar also passed under the control of Shivaji. In 1673, he invaded Berar and Telingana and in a raid on Bijapur sacked a number of cities and captured the forts of Panhala and Satara. Khafi Khan says that he allied himself with the Qutbshah, secured military and financial assistance from him and promised to recover from the Adilshah all Qutbshahi forts by joint action. But he retained all the forts except one or two and also seized Satara and Panhala built by the Adilshah himself. In 1674,

he had himself crowned and in a sudden coup against Bahadur Khan secured a booty worth about a crore of rupees. Similar raids were directed against Baglana and Khandesh as well.

He now formed still more ambitious designs. When Bahadur Khan invaded Bijapur, Shivaji made truce with Bijapur and with a view to invade the Carnatic went to Hyderabad to meet the Qutbshah in 1677. Ever since 1666 Shivaji's relations with the Qutbshah had on the whole been friendly and the latter had been aiding Shivaji with money, off and on. When Madanna came to the forefront at the Qutbshahi court, he agreed to pay Shivaji one lakh *hun* a year on the condition that he defended Golkunda against its enemies. In 1677, he secured cash and artillery from the Qutbshah on condition of sharing equally the spoils of war. But he retained not only all his conquests in the Carnatic but also the entire booty captured in course of them. This offended the Qutbshah who aligned himself with the Adilshah to reduce the power of Shivaji. But, just then, Bijapur was invaded by Diler Khan, so that its ruler instead of making war against Shivaji sought his help against the Mughals. Shivaji promptly responded to the call. In *Basatin* its author remarks that he tried to seize the fort of Bijapur by bribing the commandant but failed in the objective because the Bijapuri *Wazir* got scent of the move and had the commandant executed. But the *Wazir* had to lean on Shivaji's support once again when Mughal pressure proved too great. This time Shivaji offered help only after exacting a number of important terms. The Adilshah ceded Kopal and Belary to Shivaji and withdrew his claim of suzerainty over Tanjore and the *jagir* of Shahji.

Just about this time, Shivaji composed his differences with his step-brother Ekoji. In 1677, during the Carnatic expedition, he met him and demanded his share in his patrimony. But Ekoji, on the advice of his Muslim ministers refused to entertain the proposal. Shivaji then seized all lands, north of the *Cauvery* and returned to Maharashtra. Ekoji now marched at the head of his troops and defeated the agents of Shivaji. When Shivaji learnt of this, he sent a strongly worded letter to Ekoji who loudly protested his loyalty to the Adilshah and prepared to give battle to his brother with Adilshahi assistance. But his wife Dipabai, a woman of great sagacity, weaned her husband away from this mad design and in 1678 an amicable settlement was made between them. Shivaji handed back all the conquered territory to Ekoji or Dipabai on condition that Ekoji would give no quarter to the enemies of the Hindus and would repudiate the suzerainty of the Adilshah although he might maintain friendly relations with them.

Following this, the relations between the brothers remained friendly and Shivaji maintained an attitude of generosity towards him. In this atmosphere of conquest, hope and enthusiasm there were only two distressing elements—(1) the passing away of his mother in 1674 and (2) the unworthy conduct of his son Shambhuji who adopted such a wayward and irresponsible attitude that Shivaji had great misgivings about the future of the Marathas. In 1680, before he attained the age of 53, he fell mortally ill and passed away a few days after.

Shivaji founded a new kingdom in Maharashtra after a struggle of over thirty years. At the time of his death it included Maharashtra, Konkan and a large part of the Carnatic. The entire western sea-coast from the centre of the line joining Surat and Daman to Karwar and Ankola was subject to his authority—except a few pockets held by the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese. Towards the east, his kingdom extended to a line passing from the fort of Salher almost parallel to the sea-coast and enclosing a strip of territory about 50 miles wide, although in the Central region it bulged out from 100 to 150 miles. In the Carnatic, he held Vellore, Arni, Jinji and Tanjore. According to Sabhasad, it yielded him a revenue of one crore *huns* a year. Besides, there were many regions from where he secured *chauth* (i. e. one fourth of the annual revenue). The extent of such territory fluctuated from time to time but an idea of it may be formed from the fact that the total *chauth* due amounted to 80 lakh *huns* a year, which means that this semi-subjugated *chauth*-paying region must have been about thrice the size of Shivaji's kingdom.

At a time when the Timurid Emperors of India were planning to annex the whole of the Deccan, establishment of such an extensive kingdom by a petty jagirdar's son and an occasional levy of *chauth* even from the imperial agents is a great tribute to the unique success of Shivaji. There were occasions when the Emperor deputed his ablest commanders against him, furnished with a large and numerous army and ample supplies together with the Deccan Sultanates who also ranged themselves against him simultaneously. But no power whether singly or in collaboration was able to suppress Shivaji. We shall now discuss the many reasons which accounted for this failure.

Shivaji fixed his ideal and policy in such wise that he could easily pose as the protector of the Brahmins and the cows, architect of *Hindwi Swarajya*, founder of the Hindu Padshahi and defender and protector of Hindu religion and culture. Consequently, the Hindus persecuted by Muhammad Adilshah and Emperor Aurangzeb reverently

Death of Shivaji
(1680)

Causes of Aurangzeb's
failure against
Shivaji

Exploitation of
the religious and
the national senti-
ment

welcomed his ideal. In his fight against the Emperor he enjoyed the support of not only the people of Maharashtra but also the secret sympathies of Hindu commanders of the Emperor. When in 1666, Jaya Singh warned the Emperor that breach of faith against Shivaji might lead to a general revolt by the Rajput *mansabdars*, he was restrained from imposing the death-penalty against him. It was an open secret that Jaswant Singh was in league with him. The rank and file among the Rajputs never fought against the Marathas with the zeal usual with them. Shivaji was able to secure such support from friend and foe only because he had assumed the role not of a mere local rebel fighting for the independence of his own locality but as an opponent of the religious policy of the Emperor and the defender of the honour of the Hindus. When in 1679, Aurangzeb reimposed the *jizya* on the Hindus, the Rajputs in his service made no protest, but Shivaji addressed a vigorous letter of protest to the Emperor. This further enhanced his prestige and he was able to secure the support of Madanna Pandit largely because of the religious sentiment. Many distinguished saints like Tukaram, Ramdas, Baba Yaqut, the Mauni Baba of Patgaon, Jayaram Swami of Bargaon and Trimbak Narayan of Baramati directly or indirectly exhorted their disciples and followers to support Shivaji. Besides, Shivaji was no oppressor of the Muslims. He never destroyed a mosque or showed disrespect to the *Qoran*. Once, when an extremely beautiful Muslim maiden was brought as a captive, Shivaji unlike the common run of nobility and royalty of those days did not take her as a concubine for the satisfaction of his baser passions but remarked that if his mother had been blessed with similar charms he too might have inherited something of her beauty and sent her honourably to her people. This won him the esteem of his Muslim compatriots. Thus one of the principal reasons of the success of Shivaji was a wise exploitation of the religious sentiment.

Secondly, the geographical position of Maharashtra helped him greatly in his success. Shivaji himself dilated on this aspect thus in one of his letters dated 1664:

Geographical
factor

"My country has a hilly tract 250 miles long by 50 miles broad defended by 60 newly built forts.....By the grace of God, none has as yet been born whose invading troops could have penetrated it". We have already referred to the importance of the nature of the terrain of Maharashtra earlier in this chapter and there were numerous occasions in Shivaji's career when he was saved from ruin only by the nature of his homeland. One such instance is the quiet encirclement of Afzal Khan's troops and the selection of a meeting place inaccessible to enemy troops.

If Maharashtra had been an expansive plain, Shivaji might have found it impossible to withstand the attacks of the Adilshah and the Emperor. It was only that because the land was suited for guerilla warfare that Shivaji was able to extricate himself from dangerous situations and disrupt large armies.

The Marathas who already possessed linguistic, geographical and religious unity were fit to be knit together into a common nationality. Shivaji made it a successful instrument of realizing his aims by giving it an efficient and enthusiastic leadership which had already acquired considerable civil and military experience while the moral qualities of the Marathas stood Shivaji in good stead in his struggle for independence.

Shivaji was able to exploit the social and geographical factors effectively only because he himself possessed high merits and noble qualities. He had great dignity and an impressive personality so that the mere sight of him revealed his greatness. He was free from moral lapses and had due regard for the feelings of others in determining his line of action. His beaming face and commanding looks inspired in his followers such enthusiasm, confidence and loyalty that under his leadership they regarded nothing impossible of achievement. Their adoration and reverence for him bordered on the supernatural. His capacity for enforcing compliance to his orders was almost magical so that his soldiers and subordinates conformed scrupulously to his wishes. Those who came in contact with him generally became companions for life and none of his principal officers or commanders proved traitor to him. Not only that, some of them distinguished themselves so highly that they were described as second Shivajis. Netaji Palkar, Prataprao Gujar, Moro Trimbak Pingle and Anandrao were some of the most noted among them. Shivaji himself possessed such high courage and valour that like Emperor Akbar his personal prowess in the hours of crisis dispelled all fear and diffidence among his followers. His judgment was faultless and his choice of men for particular errands was seldom mistaken. He had the practical wisdom to adjust his policy to the exigencies of the situation and the extent of his resources. In his private life he was religious and moral but in his public dealings he was prepared to use all possible means to realize his objectives. Murder and treachery, intrigue and finesse, diplomacy and war, bribery and browbeating, submission and defiance, plunder and pillage were freely employed according to necessity. But towards his own subjects he bore a paternal affection and did all in his power to promote their happiness and prosperity. Although he made plunder a part of his policy but he kept

the soldiers always under strict discipline. Condition of his subjects compared so favourably with that of the neighbouring population that the latter often welcomed annexation to Shivaji's territory.

The scouts of Shivaji were extremely efficient. They were familiar with every inch of land in Maharashtra and knew

Scouts of Shivaji such infrequented routes as were known to nobody. Many of them knew more languages than one so that with proper disguise they could easily mix with people of different races and classes and secure valuable secret information. They kept Shivaji posted upto date about the dispositions of the enemy and were noted for their speed and accuracy. They could extricate their own army from a dangerous situation or bring in rapid reinforcements by their knowledge of secret paths. Thus their efforts was not inconsequent to the success of Shivaji.

Another cause of the success of Shivaji was that there was no love lost between his different enemies. That is why they

Mutual hostility among Shivaji's adversaries could either form no coalitions or the coalitions proved very unstable and they soon entered into secret pacts with Shivaji and even offered assistance against their own allies.

The enemies of Shivaji had their own problems which indirectly helped him. Aurangzeb had no time to deal with

Preoccupations and difficulties of Aurangzeb Shivaji as long as the latter's position was weak, because the early years of his reign were distracted with numerous risings and the presence of Shahjahan even behind prison bars-

upto 1666 was a serious threat to the stability of his authority in the north. Then revolts by the Afghans, Satnamis and Rajputs divided his forces. Besides, the Deccan was so far away that it was difficult to exercise proper control over it from Delhi or Agra. His commanders and viceroys in the Deccan did not always act with integrity and perseverance and when the Emperor sent more than one able person to act as a brake on the other, they started quarrelling among themselves, and, because of mutual jealousy tried to claim all the credit so that sustained and concerted action became impossible. Often enough they indulged in charges and countercharges against each other, and some even accepted bribes from the Marathas and Deccan Sultans and whiled away their time in sheer indolence. Consequently, the military strength of the Emperor was never strong and disciplined enough as to put up a sustained fight against the Marathas. Besides, the tactics employed by the Marathas proved unfamiliar to the Mughals who were so steeped in luxury and vice that they could hardly be expected to show much enterprise. Religious persecution and military oppression by the Emperor and his agents alienated the sympathies of the people and threw them into the arms of Shivaji. In 1672, the Emperor decided to march against him in person but fear of

failure so say the Maratha historians—deterred him from doing so. The royal princes sent to the south were on the whole indolent and ease-loving and were anxious, above all, to ensure their succession to the throne, while the Emperor distrusted everybody. Therefore, he did not give his agents adequate support. That is why, despite his possession of such an extensive empire, the man whom he contemptuously described as 'the mountain rat' or a 'brigand' secured sovereign status in the teeth of his opposition. Shivaji insulted the Emperor in his own capital in the open durbar, surprised his Viceroy in his bed, defeated his generals, pillaged his territory, levied *chauth* and sacked rich cities at will, surprised the army in its camp and scampered away with its treasure. Finally he ended by founding an independent kingdom as a standing challenge to the power of the Emperor. All this was made possible because of the internal weaknesses of the Timurids.

Shivaji's military career began with his wars against the Adilshah. But the Adilshahi Kingdom was in such a decadent state that it could not meet the challenge of Shivaji even in his early years. After 1650, the Adilshahs were incompetent while their nobles were selfish and factious. Shivaji therefore did not have to face the united strength of the Adilshah. Later, the Adilshah began to look upon him as his friend and protector. Hence he generally supported him and never sincerely collaborated with the Emperor. This, at times, so exasperated Aurangzeb that he tried to destroy the Adilshah kingdom altogether which threw Adilshah into Shivaji hands and offered him excellent opportunities to extend his territory at will.

The Qutbshah like the Adilshah also lent his support to Shivaji and gave him financial assistance in 1666. In 1673, he enabled Shivaji to make a successful war against Bijapur by lending him the use of his troops and artillery, thus enabling Shivaji to capture a number of forts. In 1677, he created favourable conditions for Shivaji's invasion of the Carnatic. Thus Qutbshah's men and money also sided Shivaji's rise to power.

With all his power, Shivaji was only a rebel upto 1674. Hence his followers could legally be executed as traitors. But in 1674, when Shivaji was shown to have descended from the Sisodiyas and was formally crowned, his constitutional status became much higher than ever. His servants became the citizens of an independent kingdom and their status underwent a great change. His supporters in Maharashtra increased while his enemies became dispirited.

Shivaji's rise to power proved a serious obstacle to Mughal expansion in the south. Some historians are of the opinion that Shivaji wanted to blazon out a path to other Successors of Shivaji Hindu leaders of India by setting before them a glorious example of the liberation of Maharashtra. If he had lived a little longer, the kingdom would have gained in strength and territory. But what the might of Aurangzeb and Adilshah had failed to achieve was soon accomplished by the weaknesses of Shivaji's successor. The qualities necessary for the realisation of the aims of Shivaji were conspicuous by their absence in his heir Shambhuji. Hence after the death of Shivaji the mother of Rajaram tried to place her own son on throne.

But Shambhuji was not so utterly worthless that he could easily be passed over. Hence it was he who became the next Chhatrapati. He ruled from 1680 to 1689. During his reign, the Maratha government and court became a prey to the same evils from which the Mughal nobles and courtiers suffered. Shambhuji suspected everybody although the fault was not entirely his own. Rajaram's mother Soyra Bai, Annaji Datto and a few other disgruntled persons were engaged in constant intrigues against him. This state of affairs caused a grievous loss to the newly founded Maratha kingdom. Trusted and experienced officers of Shivaji were one by one eliminated either by execution or imprisonment and Kavi Kalash, a Kanyakubja poet from the north, became the conscience-keeper of Shambhuji. He did not place full reliance in any Maratha chief and the Marathas in their turn considered it galling to their pride to submit to domination by a northerner. Thus the builders of the Maratha state themselves became or were suspected to be its enemies.

Just about this time, prince Akbar one of the sons of Aurangzeb came to Shambhuji in the company of Durga Das. Durga Das wanted that Shambhuji should invade the north in full strength where Aurangzeb's Plans for the conquest of the Deccan the discriminatory policy of Aurangzeb would secure for him the support of the Rajputs and other Hindus. Probably it was on his advice that Shambhuji and prince Akbar who had now assumed imperial titles invited Rama Singh Kachhwaha the ruler of Amber to assume leadership of the Rajputs and collaborate in a war against the Emperor of Delhi. Both these letters condemned the religious policy of Aurangzeb and proposed his deposition while the letter from Akbar promised him in addition a high *mansab* and preferment at court. Rama Singh did not think it prudent to promise support without an invading army in sight. On the other hand Shambhuji and Akbar could not develop sincere good-will and cooperation for each other. Shambhuji's apprehensions were that he might really be an imperial

spy deputed to decoy him to the north. Akbar on his part had hoped that Shambhuji would be as popular and powerful as his great father. That is why he had said in his first letter, "If by the grace of God I succeed in deposing my father, I shall be content with mere nominal sovereignty and leave the substance of it be enjoyed by you." But on entering the Maratha Kingdom, he found that Shambhuji lacked both internal cohesion and capacity to enforce a grand plan and as time passed, the impression grew only stronger and stronger.

As soon as Aurangzeb learnt of Akbar's flight towards the south, he took steps to secure his arrest. But he did not succeed in the attempt. Akbar's defection to the Marathas portended a serious threat to the Emperor's life and position. He therefore decided to go south and put an end to it. Aurangzeb now ordered that conditions in the north should be so arranged that there may be no serious cause for worry while he employed all his energies to bring to book his rebellious son and his Maratha patron. Having settled the affairs of the north, the Emperor mobilised a large army under experienced captains of war. Huge stocks of ammunition and other supplies were collected and the Emperor proceeded south at the head of this army in the company of his children and grand-children. On reaching the south, he tried to surround the Marathas on all sides so that Akbar might find no room for exit elsewhere. His diplomacy precluded the possibility of the Sidis of Janjira and the European traders from lending any aid to the Marathas. He exhorted the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda to attack the Marathas, and also sent a few detachments to the Konkan.

Aurangzeb did not meet with much success in the initial stages. From 1681 to 1683, the Marathas not only held their ground but led plundering raids into the Deccan. Defeat and death of Shambhuji (1689) Mughal empire as well. Simultaneously, Shambhuji attacked both by land and sea the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese as well. But a diversion by imperial commanders deprived him of victory. If he had attempted an invasion of the north, he would probably have met with greater success. But after 1682 that possibility was also ruled out. The only course now open to him was the establishment of a strong front in Maharashtra. His credit at the moment stood high. As for the Mughals, the Emperor had suspicions against all his sons and commanders, and he dared not go in person against Shambhuji. These latter were so overawed by the Marathas that they dared not give them a vigorous pursuit. In these circumstances, the Emperor acted with great fortitude. He spread a net of highly efficient spies to find out the real intentions of his generals, to throw an apple of discord between Shambhuji and Akbar, to induce Akbar to return to his father, to estimate the strength and

resources of Shambhuji and to probe into the secret motives of the Adilshah and the Qutbshah. The information thus collected convinced him by the end of 1684 that it was impossible to suppress the Marathas without putting an end to the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda. Hence from 1685 to 1687, he directed his energies towards the annexation of these states. While this was happening, Akbar was exhorting Shambhuji to lead a bold attack on the imperial camp and capture the Emperor by collaboration with malcontents among his followers. But Shambhuji had neither the courage to make such a bold bid nor the good sense to reform his ways of life and win the confidence of all sections of the Marathas. Consequently, it became possible for the Emperor to hunt him down to his last refuge and take him a prisoner in 1689. Akbar made good his escape to Persia and died there in 1704.

Shambhuji and Kavi Kalash were publicly insulted and subjected to tortures for eliciting names of disaffected Mughal generals. But at this time Shambhuji gave some evidence of manly courage when he sent words to the Emperor that he was willing to make friends with him but only on condition, that the Emperor married his daughter to him. This infuriated the Emperor so much that he had him hacked to pieces. This was the inglorious end of the son and successor of the great Shivaji.

The greatest service rendered by Shambhuji to the Maratha nation was the courageous manner in which he died. The tale of his tortures and the bold reply he had

Capture of Raygarh
(1689)

made won for him respect in the hearts of the Marathas who forgot all his vices in life. The Marathas were fired with determination to avenge the indignities on the son of their beloved hero Shivaji. During Shambhuji's life-time an attempt had been made to replace him by Rajaram in 1680, 1681, 1684 and 1688. The death of Shambhuji naturally led to the accession of Rajaram which healed the differences between the rival groups and facilitated the forging of a united front in Maharashtra for the defence of the dignity of the house of Shivaji. But it took time to mature into a full-blooded national counter-offensive. The Emperor tried to capture Rajaram, but he escaped to Jinji disguised as a hermit. Raygarh fell to the Emperor and many ladies of the royal family and Shahu the son of Shambhuji were captured by the imperialists. Aurangzeb abstained from maltreating them, lest it should render subjugation of the Marathas all the more difficult. He only tried to drive a wedge between them by recognizing Shahu as the successor of Shambhuji and by appointing him a *mansabdar* of 6,000 and at the same time granting a free pardon to all those Marathas who surrendered to him.

Thus by the close of the year 1689 all the three Deccan kingdoms seemed to have been liquidated. The imperial ensign fluttered over the forts of Bijapur, Golkunda, Hyderabad, Raygarh and other forts and the Emperor became the master of the whole of the south.

Shambhuji's wife Yesu Bai had advised Rajaram after his accession to leave Raygarh for some other place of safety and to continue Maratha raids on the imperial

territory. The future policy of the Marathas was fixed up in that light. A few months

later, Raygarh was occupied by the Emperor and Yesu Bai was carried as a prisoner but even in that capacity she was able to send the Marathas much useful information about the imperial camp.

Rajaram himself was by no means a competent ruler. He possessed neither a strong character nor capacity for leadership on the battlefield or the council table. But despite those feelings the Marathas respected him for he was the son of Shivaji. Fortunately for him, he secured the services of many able persons. All those who were rotting in jails as victims of Shambhuji's wrath were now released. The struggle threw up a number of new leaders as well. Between 1689-1700 six persons particularly distinguished themselves. Ramachandra Pant stayed on in Maharashtra and in the absence of the Chhatrapati selected able leaders, assigned them work suited to their talents, inspired them with a zeal to leave no stone unturned in the service of Maharashtra Dharma and spared himself no pains to integrate their activities into a single plan. It was the ability and resourcefulness of this Brahmin that wove afresh the broken strings of Maratha government into a tough pattern. Prahlad Niraji did practically the same in Carnatic and he built up a strong front against the Emperor by welding together the Rajas and the Polygars of the south. Among these, Ramachandra Pant decidedly played the superior role. Chief among those who put their schemes into execution were Parashuram Trimbak Pratinidhi, Shankaraji Narayan Sachiva, Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhava. The first two assumed charge of conquest and defence of forts situated in the 'Swarajya' while the other two undertook the responsibility to raid Mughal territory, harass Mughal generals, cut off their supplies and rifle their treasures. Among these generals, Santaji proved to be the ablest, the boldest and the most successful. He carried guerilla warfare to its apotheosis. His spies wormed themselves into the armies and establishments of the Emperor while his soldiers acted in perfect discipline and according to plan. His first great success was to reach the imperial tent by night, cut its ropes and kill all the inmates. Luckily, the Emperor had agreed to spend the night in his daughter's apartment or else the death of Shambhuji would have been duly avenged the

same night. His next great exploit was to escort Rajaram safely to Jinji. Thus upto 1697 he won a number of signal successes, once even trapping Kam Bakhsh and Zulfiqar Khan. But Rajaram accepted their terms and allowed them to escape. Upto 1697, Rajaram stayed on at Jinji while Zulfiqar Khan continued to besiege it. In 1697, Rajaram had to return to Maharashtra and fixed his head-quarters at Satara but it was soon occupied by the imperialists.

The aim of Aurangzeb between 1689-1700 was the capture of Rajaram and the annihilation of the power of the Marathas. The Emperor used force and fraud, war and diplomacy, bribery and corruption to secure his end. He assigned large *jagirs* to Maratha deserters and if they accepted Islam promoted them to a higher *mansab*. He was, therefore, able to seize Raygarh, Jinji and Satara. But the power of the Marathas continued to increase all the same.

The credit for this is principally due to Ramachandra Pant and his lieutenants. It was they who inspired the Maratha captains to stake their all in the defence of Hindu religion and avenge the indignities heaped on the house of Shivaji. A number of precautions were taken against treachery and desertion. They were told that the aims of the Marathas was the liberation whole of the north and the south, occupation of Hyderabad, Bijapur, Aurangabad and Delhi with the view to provide to the Hindus full freedom for the observance of their faith. They pronounced political freedom to be the basis of religious liberty and for the acquisition of political sovereignty, obedience and discipline, courage and sacrifice were essential. The Maratha captains were offered the bait of assignment after independence in permanent *jagir* from the imperial territory captured by them. Secret agents were appointed to keep an eye over their movements and all deserters to the enemy were regarded worse than enemies themselves and their families were subjected to severe tortures in retaliation for this. If deserters to the Emperor expressed willingness to return to the path of duty, they were given high office and suitable *jagirs*. Thus, every ambitious young man of merit was enabled to tread the path of glory trailed by Shivaji or Santaji. The entire Maratha race was thus in arms against the emperor. All sensible persons now realized the futility of attempting to suppress the Marathas by force. The imperial army could not be present at all places and at all times and a ceaseless war over such a wide front was neither prudent nor practicable. But the Emperor refused to swerve from his resolve to annihilate the Marathas. This was utterly impossible because the rank and file as well as the commanders of the army did not see eye to eye with him and had got thoroughly sick of war. One and all pined for peace, but the Emperor, though grown very old, would not die while everybody wished and prayed for his early demise.

Hence all important persons were anxious, more to secure their future after the Emperor's death, than to waste their energies in fighting the Marathas. The effect of this attitude of mind can well be illustrated by the example of Zulfiqar Khan. He had been directed to lay siege to Jinji with a view to capture Rajaram. The Emperor continued to send him reinforcements in men, supplies and ammunition. But Jinji was captured only after Rajaram and the members of his family had reached Maharashtra in safety. This was due to a secret pact between Rajaram and Zulfiqar Khan that after the death of the Emperor they would help one another in founding independent kingdoms, Rajaram seizing Bijapur while Zulfiqar Khan occupied Golkunda. Similar was the case with other generals. That is why, despite Rajaram's incompetence the Emperor failed to destroy the power of the Marathas.

In 1700, Rajaram died. After his death, his wife Tarabai kept the Marathas in order. Her four-year old son was accepted as the next Chhatrapati and she began to wield the sceptre as his regent. The Emperor occupied Panhala in 1701, Vishalgarh in 1702 and Singharh in 1703. But his authority proved short-lived. Tarabai herself moved from place to place, contacted the local leaders, infused in them fresh vigour and courage and exhorted them to act strictly according to plan. Consequently, the death of Rajaram made Maratha resistance stouter still. In 1704, Satara was reoccupied. Other forts also began to fall one after the other and the Emperor realized that all that he had achieved was being rapidly undone.

Aurangzeb had gone to Aurangabad in 1682. Since then he had been engaged almost constantly in a war of annihilation against the Marathas. But he failed in his objective. After 1703, he too began to weary of the effort. He was past 85 and most of his trusted lieutenants were dead. The survivors were strongly in favour of cessation of war. The ladies of the royal household were pestering him with repeated requests to be permitted to die in Agra, safe from the clutches of the enemy. Forced by these circumstances, he opened negotiations for peace with the Marathas. Dhanaji Jadhav the Maratha commander-in-chief was contacted. The latter proposed the following terms

(1) Shahu should be accepted the Chhatrapati and he should be empowered to realize *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the six *subas* of the Deccan.

(2) Shahu will enjoy the status of a vassal prince and Dhanaji Jadhav will act as his regent and offer fealty to the Emperor in his personal capacity.

(3) All the Maratha leaders should be received in the open durbar and offered *khilats* by the Emperor.

(4) The Marathas will be responsible for defence and law and order in the Deccan *Subas* and will recognize Kam Bakhsh as the successor of the Emperor in the Deccan.

Aurangzeb agreed to these terms. But when the Marathas started pouring in at the head of their troops he was unduly alarmed and feared it might be a clever ruse to capture him in his own camp. He therefore broke off negotiations and the war continued as ever. In 1706 another abortive attempt was made. The Emperor now fell back on Ahmadnagar and died there in 1707.

After his death, the question of further expansion was utterly ruled out. Instead, there started a process of crashing Effect of the Deccan policy of the Mughals disintegration; the causes and course of which we shall examine in the next section. The Deccan policy of the Timurids in the ultimate analysis proved ruinous to them. If they had followed the example of Alauddin, they might have derived greater benefits. But the circumstances of expansion of their empire rendered it difficult to stop it half-way. Akbar initiated the policy of annexations in the Deccan and its evil effects began to show themselves even in his own days. The revolt of Salim, suspected defection of the Khan-i-Khanan to the enemy and the Portuguese intrigues against the Emperor were some of the consequences. The Deccan states were undoubtedly weak but they were not so paralysed that they could be seized at will. That is why the decadent sultanates of the Deccan were able to continue the struggle against the Timurids for over 90 years. Jahangir suffered grievous losses because of his wars in the Deccan. Malik Ambar defeated most of the imperial generals or gagged their activities by offers of gold and joined hands with the rebellious prince to invade the empire. The overweening pride and consequent rebellion of Shahjahan can also be attributed to his successes in the Deccan.

From the days of Shahjahan, Deccan proved a source of greater worry to the empire. It was during his reign that the struggle against the Marathas was initiated and which finally assumed such dangerous proportions that it proved ruinous to the empire itself. Again, it was from his time that the Deccan states made bribery a regular weapon of offence and defence and kept most of the imperial commanders in their regular pay.

In the reign of Aurangzeb, the evil consequences of annexation of the Deccan showed themselves too plainly. From 1660 to 1681, Aurangzeb attempted subjugation of Deccan through his subordinates while from 1682 to 1707 he tried

to realize it under his own personal superintendence at the spot. The result of it was, that the foundations of the empire were rudely shaken and it tottered for a fall. During the Emperor's 25 years of fighting, estimates Sir Jadunath, the army suffered on an average annual losses of about a lakh of men and three lakh of horses, camels, mules and elephants. The finances of the empire were in an appalling state. Disaffection and disorder became rampant even in the north and the Central Government became weak. Conditions in the south became so chaotic that the people suffered heavily and formation of new states soon started. The Emperor's desire to destroy the power of the Marathas and establish his undisputed sway over the whole of the Deccan on a permanent basis was reversed. The Marathas destroyed the empire and the Emperor, and his successors instead of acquiring the Deccan lost the north in the bargain.

Further Readings

1. Sarkar—*Shivaji* 4th (Edn.)
2. Sarkar—*House of Shivaji*
3. Sarkar—*A short History of Aurangzeb*, Chapters, XXI and XIV-XVI.
4. Sarkar—*History of Aurangzeb*, Volumes IV and V.
5. Sardesai—*New History of the Marathas*, Volum. I.
6. Faruqi—*Aurangzeb and his times*, Chapters. XVI-XVIII.
7. Cambridge—*History of India*, Volume. IV, Chapters. IX-X.
8. Grant Duff—*History of the Marathas*.
9. Paranjpe—*English Records on Shivaji* (1659-1682) Volumes I and II.
10. Ranade—*Rise of the Maratha Power*.
11. Krishnaji Anant (Sahasad)—*Sahasad Bakhar (Marathi)* Tr. into English by J. Mankar—*Life and Exploits of Shivaji*.
(See also books at the end of Chapters V and X).

CHAPTER XII

NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER POLICY—THE CONQUEST OF ASSAM

With the establishment of Turkish dominion over northern India, Bengal also passed under their sway. In the 16th and 17th centuries Akbar and his successors tried to extend their dominion over the whole of the north and the south, and thus came in contact with states on the north-eastern frontier but it was not so easy to subjugate these eastern neighbours of Bengal. *viz.*, the states Kamrup, Kuch Bihar, Assam and Arakan.

Speaking of this region, it is hilly and covered with forests, numerous rivers flow down the slopes of these hills and cover the valleys with rich alluvial soil. The climate is unusually damp so that in those days it was the home of numerous dangerous diseases. The forests abounded in wild life but the presence of elephants made them economically valuable. The forests yielded rich commercial timber which was worked as an industry even in those days. Rainfall is profuse, and from May to October the whole expanse gets covered with water and all roads and land routes become impassable. Movement from one place to another during these months was extremely difficult. Men from other parts of India found this part of the year the most inconvenient. This region has always been noted for silk and timber industries and the local people have developed woodcraft as a fine art and produce articles of great excellence and artistic merit.

The local population is composed of many racial strands. Political authority in Kamrup and Kuch Bihar was in the hands of the Dravido-Mongolian people but there were some Aryan settlements as well. Then there was the aboriginal tribes whose political importance was comparatively insignificant. In Assam, political power vested in the hands of the Ahoms, a people of Mongolian origin and allied to the Shans of Burma. The pattern of government in Assam was a feudal monarchy while Kamrup and Kuch Bihar were ruled by autocratic despots. The people of Kamrup and Kuch Bihar had had social, economic and political contacts with the people of Bengal from very early times so that Hindu religion and

culture had already made its entry there and then spread to Assam.

The people of this region had had some contacts with the Sultans of Delhi or their governors in Bengal as well. When Bengal had an independent sultanate of its own, the pressure towards the east naturally increased. In or about 1206, Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad Khilji was the first to invade Kamrup but he suffered such a crushing defeat that he died of humiliation or was killed by his disgusted followers. After this Ghiyasuddin Iwaz (1226-1227) and Mughisuddin (1257) made two more unsuccessful attempts. After another two abortive attempts by Sultan Ghiyasuddin Bahadur of Bengal and Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq of Delhi in the 14th century, Sultan Sikandar of Bengal established his temporary sway over Kamrup and issued coins from there bearing his name (1357). But as Sultan Firoz Tughluq marched upon his capital just then, Sikandar's plans of conquest of Kamrup stopped half-way and he had to return *post haste* to Bengal.

It was towards the close of the 15th century that Sultan Alauddin Husain Shah of Bengal first established more or less permanent control over Kamrup. It was then ruled by a Hindu dynasty with head-quarters at Kamtapur. The Sultan occupied the capital, put its ruler Raja Nilambar to death and established his authority over the whole of Kamrup. But 25 years later a new leader, Vishwa Singh started a struggle of independence and in 1529 established the Kuch dynasty. It was with his descendants that the Timurids came into contact.

In the latter half of the sixteenth century, Bengal was ruled by the Afghans. As the Timurids had secured dominion over India only by displacing the Afghans, they wanted to destroy all vestiges of their power throughout India. Later Akbar and his descendants in a desire to secure natural frontiers were forced to seek expansion towards the north-east.

When Akbar invaded Bengal, Nar Narayan, the contemporary ruler of Kuch Bihar sent him, in 1574, presents and a message of good-will through his envoy. In 1578 he sent another envoy and the Emperor entered into a mutual defence pact with him. As a result of this treaty, friendly relations between the two houses continued for practically twenty years.

Akbar did not wish to take on any fresh commitments on the north-eastern frontier because of wars on the north-west and other preoccupations. But the inherent defects of a despotic government soon provided an opportunity for extension of his influence. The kingdom of Nar Narayan was divided between his son Lakshmi Narayan and nephew Raghudeva. Lakshmi Narayan was an incompetent sensualist so that

Raghudeva tried to assert his independence and sought the aid of Isa Khan, an Afghan leader of Bengal. Frightened by this, Lakshmi Narayan of his own accord waited on Man Singh, the Mughal governor of Bengal in 1596 and accepted the suzerainty of the Emperor to secure his aid against Raghudeva. The imperial army defeated Raghudeva and set Lakshmi Narayan's worries at rest.

In these circumstances, Raghudeva first leaned on the support of Isa Khan and after the latter's death allied himself with the Ahoms to defend his independence. Jahangir occupies Kamrup (1612-1613) This state of affairs continued till the end of the reign of Akbar. But as soon as the imperial army had leisure, it naturally turned towards the subjugation of Kamrup. Lakshmi Narayan and Parikshit, the ruler of Kamrup were engaged in a protracted struggle. Lakshmi Narayan sought the aid of the emperor for the chastisement of Parikshit and when the Mughal governor pressed for clear association agreed to pay an annual tribute in 1609. Up to 1612 the Governor of Bengal was busy suppressing the risings of Pratapaditya of Jessore and Usman Khan, the Afghan chief but as soon as these risings had been put down, the Bengal army invaded Kamrup, charging Parikshit with tyranny and oppression. The latter put up a stubborn fight but was captured and thrown into prison and his kingdom annexed.

Lakshmi Narayan had not been prepared for such a development. Instead, he had hoped to secure the whole of Kamrup for himself. But in this he had to be disappointed and had even to spend some years in prison. He was released in 1617 and spent the remaining ten years of his life assisting the governors of Kamrup and engaging in a constant struggle against Parikshit's younger brother Bali Narayan and other rebels. Thus during the reign of Jahangir, Kamrup was annexed to the Empire and Kuch Bihar became a tributary state.

When during Shahjahan's illness a war of succession started, Pran Narayan, the ruler of Kuch Bihar asserted his independence and stopped paying tribute (1658). But in 1665 he had to return to vassalage again. After this, Kuch Bihar ceased to have any important role and by 1711 the privileges of its ruling dynasty were reduced almost to a nullity and large tracts of the kingdom were assigned to imperial agents between 1685 and 1711.

The Ahoms viewed with alarm the Mughal expansion towards the north-east. Hence they refused to enter into any relations with them. But with the establishment of Mughal authority over Kamrup and Kuch Bihar, Mughal arms reached the very frontiers of Assam. The Ahom rulers had aided Raghudeva and

Parikshit against the imperial agents. This had led to mutual recrimination and frontier disputes. A similar incident took place in 1615 when the imperial governor Qasim Khan invaded Assam in defence of the rights of certain Indian traders. But this brought him only defeat and humiliation.

After this, mutual estrangement continued to grow. The Ahom chief took under his protection Chandra

Narayan, the son and Bali Narayan, the brother of Parikshit Narayan. This delayed the War against the Ahoms (1636-1639) pacification of Kamrup because Bali Narayan with Ahom assistance made repeated, though infructuous raids against Mughal agents. Shahjahan tried to put an end to this state of affairs and lodged a protest against encroachments on the frontier, harbouring of rebels against the Mughal authority and offering them armed assistance against the Emperor. But the Ahoms paid no heed.

Consequently, preparations for war started and in 1636 hostilities began which lasted upto 1639. In the initial stages, Bali Narayan and the Ahom ruler occupied most of Kamrup and defeated the Mughals in a number of military and naval engagements. But by January 1637, the process was reversed. Reinforced from the rear, the Mughal commanders started a counter-offensive. Within a year, they occupied the whole of Kamrup and invaded Assam to chastise the Ahoms. But in this last they did not meet with any success. Hence they negotiated for peace. The Ahom ruler had already suffered considerable losses and two of his generals Bali Narayan and Shatrughit had been killed while the enemy lay encamped within his own territory, so he too agreed to negotiate and in February 1639 peace was finally restored.

According to the terms of the peace, the Ahom ruler recognized the imperial annexation of Kamrup, accepted Bar Nadi and Asur as the boundary between Assam and

The peace of 1639 Kamrup and surrendered Gauhati to the Emperor. The Ahom ruler also agreed to enter into trading relations. Thus after a period of about forty years of struggle an atmosphere of peace was established.

This peace lasted for about twenty years. But when the war of succession started in 1657, the Ahom ruler planned to seize Kamrup. He defeated Pran Narayan and the imperial agents and occupied the whole of Kamrup.

Recrudescence of war 1658

When Aurangzeb appointed Mir Jumla as the governor of Bengal, he directed him to prepare for the invasion of Burma and China after consolidating the north-eastern frontier. On Mir Jumla's arrival in Bengal, the Ahom ruler Jayadhwaja sent an envoy to impress on him that he had no ill-will against

the Emperor and that he had done nothing against him. He had occupied Kamrup only in an effort to put down the rebellion of Pran Narayan and was therefore ready to restore it to anybody whom the Emperor named as his representative.

Mir Jumla accepted his explanation and deputed an army for the reoccupation of Kamrup. But Jayadhwaja had made this friendly gesture only to gain time for military preparations. He did not think it proper to permit the imperialists to enter Kamrup. Consequently, war started once again. Mir Jumla decided to begin with the invasion of Kuch Bihar so that there may be no cause for anxiety in the rear. He entered Kuch Bihar in November 1661 at the head of 12,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry, 323 sails and a powerful artillery. The flight of Pran Narayan facilitated his advance and he entered Kamrup having arranged for the government of Kuch Bihar. Advancing along the *Brahmaputra* he captured Gauhati, Shrighat, Kajali, Samadhara and other minor forts. Jayadhwaja fled from the capital which was soon occupied by Mir Jumla, and the Assamese river-craft was destroyed.

As a result of these victories, Mir Jumla obtained large quantities of ammunition and food-grains. But he did not allow loot or plunder. This prevented dispersal of his power and saved him from public opposition. But the worst enemies of the invading armies in Assam were the rains and the diseases that came in the wake of them. After Jayadhwaja's defeat, Mir Jumla's troops had to meet a simultaneous onslaught by both these enemies. When this began to bear fruit, Jayadhwaja's troops started their harassing raids and Mir Jumla suffered very heavy losses. But he neither lost heart nor let the soldiers get demoralised. As soon as the rains stopped, he started the offensive again so that in January 1663 Jayadhwaja was obliged to accept humiliating terms.

Terms of the Peace (1) Jayadhwaja agreed to send his daughter (1663) to the Mughal court as a hostage.

(2) He accepted the suzerainty of the Emperor and agreed to send an annual tribute of twenty elephants.

(3) He also agreed to indemnify the losses of the Emperor by immediately paying 20,000 tolas of gold and 1,20,000 tolas of silver and despatching 20 elephants for the Emperor and 20 for his commanders. Besides, he had also to pay within a year 3 lakh tolas of silver and 90 elephants in three instalments.

(4) As long as the total amount of indemnity was not paid, the sons of principal nobles of Jayadhwaja were to stay with Mir Jumla as hostages.

(5) About half of Darang was annexed to the Empire.

Mir Jumla had considerably augmented the prestige and possessions of the Emperor by fourteen months of fighting.

Death of Mir Jumla (1663) Kamrup and Kuch Bihar returned to imperial authority again, a portion of Assam abounding in elephants became a part of the empire and the rest was brought under the Emperor's suzerainty. By keeping the sons of nobles as hostages, he restrained them from breach of peace in future. His conquests opened the road to the invasion of Arakan and Burma. But he died only two months later in March 1663.

Mir Jumla's death caused a grievous loss to the empire. Chakradhwaja, the new ruler of Assam started military preparations and in 1666-1667 recaptured all

Loss of Assam and Kamrup the imperial possessions in Assam upto Gauhati. After this, fighting continued for many years but the Emperor could not spare a large force for this front. Consequently, Kamrup also was occupied by the ruler of Assam and all traces of Mir Jumla's victory disappeared. The Raja of Kuch Bihar came back and he too had to be restored to his former dignities. Thus the desire to reach natural frontiers remained chimerical and the defeats suffered in this region considerably lowered the prestige of the Emperor.

Chittagong had been a bone of contention between the rulers of Bengal and the Arakan for centuries. In the 17th century, Arakan was ruled by the Annexion of Chittagong (1665-1666) : Maghs. They came to an agreement with the Mughals by which the *Pheni* became the boundary between the two kingdoms. But at this time, many Portuguese who had also settled down in Arakan gave birth to a new race by their intermarriages with the local people. This new race proved to be bold pirates. They had ships of their own which they employed in piratical raids against anybody and everybody. Sometimes, they even collaborated with the Arakanese navy in its wars against its enemies. They made repeated raids on the Bengal sea-coast and freely plundered the peaceful citizens to the extent of carrying away a number of them as prisoners to be sold away into slavery. Aurangzeb had asked Mir Jumla to suppress them but his death soon after the Assamese war prevented him from carrying out this assignment. His successor in office, Shayasta Khan now undertook this task.

The war against Assam and Kamrup coupled with the raids of the Arakanese and the foreigners had practically destroyed the imperial navy in Bengal. Hence Shayasta Khan first started the work of reconstruction. Within a year, 300 ships were built and in order to equip them for war, they were fitted with guns and other accessories.

Having made these preparations, the imperialists attacked and captured the Son Island. This partly rehabilitated the lost prestige of the imperial navy. Shayasta Khan then succeeded in winning over the foreign settlers to his side. This diplomatic success was followed up by an attack on Chittagong. Arakan was invaded both by land and by sea. Ibn Hasan commanded the navy while Farhad Khan led the land forces. The Arakanese suffered a defeat both on land and sea and the imperialists occupied Chittagong. A *faujdar* was appointed to govern it under the control of the governor of Bengal and Chittagong emerged as the guardian fortress and sea-port of the eastern boundary of the Mughal Empire. Never after this did the Arakanese violate imperial territory.

It is noteworthy that Shayasta Khan secured success not by crushing the foreigners but by leaning on their support. On many an occasion imperial agents defeated their enemies on the eastern and the western sea-coasts with European assistance. But they never made an attempt to acquire sufficient strength to overpower the Europeans if necessary, and to render them innocuous for political intrigue.

We have studied the expansion of the empire in different regions in the foregoing chapters. Although it was Babar who laid the foundation of the empire by occupying Delhi and Agra and crippling the power of the Rajputs and the Afghans, but it was under Humayun that it came to an abrupt end. Hence the expansion of the empire really began from the reign of Akbar. He began his career as the master of the Punjab and a part of modern Uttar Pradesh. But by a combination of diplomacy and war he brought under his banner a large tract of land extending from Kabul and Qandahar in the west to Bengal and Orissa in the east and from Kashmir in the north to Ahmadnagar in the south. After him, further expansion took place in three directions. On the north-west, the desire to conquer Balkh, Badakhshan, Samarqand and Bokhara persisted upto the time of Shahjahan and for a while there were even signs of its partial realization. But this proved fatal to the empire and besides involving serious losses in men and money led to the loss of Qandahar as well. Thus the successors of Akbar, far from making any additions in this region, suffered the loss of an

A resume of expansion of the Empire

important part of their empire. Another sphere of expansion was in the south. Here in the beginning, there was a sort of stalemate. But Shahjahan liquidated the Nizamshahi kingdom of Ahmadnagar and brought Bijapur and Golkunda under his vassalage. Both Shahjahan and Dara were opposed to going any further. Dara particularly felt that as these two Muslim states in the Deccan had been in existence for over a hundred and fifty years they should be treated on terms of parity with the Rajputs. He had hoped that this would lead to the same beneficial results in the south as had flown from conciliations of the Rajputs in the north. But Aurangzeb was not in favour of such a policy. He was unwilling to concede them parity with the Rajputs because unlike them they were neither indigenous nor popular among the people. Besides, their nobles too were not as loyally attached to their masters as the Rajputs. He therefore regarded extinction of these states as a matter of course. When he noticed general lawlessness and disorder within their boundaries he felt it was his sacred duty as the heir to the noble principles of Akbar that local disorders should be replaced by imperial good government so that the people may live in ease and comfort. When the Deccan states showed special reverence to the Shah of Persia, openly aided the Marathas and offered high appointments to the Hindus, he felt it was his solemn duty as a Sunni Muslim ruler to put an end to them altogether. He therefore annexed the two states to the empire and tried to destroy the power of the Marathas. The Emperor knew that the Marathas enjoyed the support not only of the local population but even of the Hindus of the north. But he could not safely let them alone as in that case Shivaji and his successors would have made short work of the decadent Muslim sultanates of the Deccan. If the Emperor had recognized the Marathas as the rulers of a certain part of the Deccan and had been content with retaining his authority over the rest of the land, that too was impossible for Shambhuji had taken up the cause of Akbar and was exhorting the Rajputs to rise in rebellion against the Emperor. When the Marathas offered conciliation, they demanded the right of levying *chauth* from the whole of the Deccan as the price of their submission. The administrative and military set up and the political ideals that the Marathas received as a legacy from Shivaji made it impossible for the Marathas to remain pacific for long. Thus, circumstances forced Aurangzeb to resolve on annihilation of the Marathas. He exerted to the uttermost for the realization of this end but failed in the attempt, and soon after his death practically the whole of south India became independent, though in certain parts his successors enjoyed nominal sovereignty for another hundred and fifty years. Thus in this region unbridled ambition ultimately led to disaster and the entire

imperial edifice was badly shaken to its very foundation. The third sphere of extension of territory was the north-east where at one time Kamrup, Kuch Bihar and Assam were subjugated and the invasion of Burma and China came within the range of possibility. But the success in this region proved ephemeral and the only gain in this region was a fraction of Kamrup and the fort and town of Chittagong.

After the death of Akbar, the empire was at the height of its glory probably in the year 1640 in the reign of Shahjahan. But it lasted only for five years. From 1645-1646, the Uzbeks and Persians in the north and Shivaji in the south started their encroachments on the imperial territory. Aurangzeb tried to stop the rot and if military conquests alone could ensure the expansion and defence of the empire, he would have succeeded in the attempt. But many elements in his policy gave rise to portentous explosive movements which gathered full weight and momentum only after his death. Thus during his reign, one witnesses the dual scene simultaneously of the empire at its zenith and certain doom.

Further Readings

1. Sudhindranath Bhattacharya—*A History of Mughal North-East Frontier Policy*.
 2. Sarkar—*A Short History of Aurangzeb* pp. 122-137.
- (See also the books given at the end of Chapter V).

CHAPTER XIII

THE FORCES OF DISINTEGRATION—THEIR NATURE AND INFLUENCE.

After a period of progressive expansion for a hundred and fifty years the Timurid empire in India began to break up. But it had acquired such strength and solidity that it took nearly fifty years to disintegrate and even then after its almost total liquidation its nominal sovereignty survived another hundred years. It was only after the failure of the First War of Indian Independence that the last Timurid Emperor was formally deposed and his crown offered to the British monarch. The decline and fall of this mighty empire came about by a variety of factors and forces, the working of which forms the subject-matter of succeeding chapters in this section. Presently, however, it will suffice to follow the nature and character of these factors and forces.

India is a vast country with considerable local variations in respect of culture and economic development. Real progress of the people of different local units

Desire for local autonomy depends on preserving and promoting their distinctive individuality. But in a centralised unitary government it is not possible to respect these local variations as effectively as in an independent or autonomous government of the locality concerned. Consequently, all those parts of the empire which had formerly been ruled by independent local chiefs, retained memory of those days and some feeling of discontent against loss of privilege or opportunity naturally remained after annexation to the empire. Thus more or less everywhere a desire for local autonomy or independence survived. As long as the authority of the Central government was strong and the policy of the rulers was enlightened and paternal, this sentiment lay dormant, but as soon as the Central government showed signs of weakness or decay, it gained in momentum and vitality. Wherever a competent local leader sought to exploit this sentiment, disaffection and revolt started and, in the event of its success, the empire began to dwindle.

A vast country like India cannot be efficiently governed from a single centre. Wherever the capital is located the local people generally secure majority of appointments in the Central Government. Commercial and cultural benefits flowing from the capital fall mostly to the share of the local inhabitants. Thus a centralised Government for the whole land

Shortcomings of an All-India Government

is often suspected of regional or parochial favouritism so that the people of distant provinces begin to grumble that their interests are going by default. Besides, the success of large empires is contingent on the existence of rapid means of communication and an efficient bureaucracy. Before the invention of the railway and the telegraph, the Emperor could at best secure quick reports from provinces by organising *dak-chaukis* but he could not possibly act with equal rapidity. Once a rebellion had gained time to spread it was not easy to suppress it. Quick transfers often acted as a brake on rebellious tendencies but then they also precluded the possibility of acquiring intimate local knowledge which was the *sine qua non* of promoting public peace and prosperity. Then, there were differences in race, language and religion; an officer who was a great success in Gujerat might fail to make much headway in Assam. Then again all parts of the empire were not equally attractive so that it was difficult to find suitable persons for certain assignments. This added to the difficulties of the empire.

In hereditary despotisms the power is bound at one time or the other to go into the hands of incompetent persons. Inherent defects of hereditary despotisms because an able father may beget a most unworthy son under whose regime rebellions and intrigues, factions and dissensions appear as a matter of course. After the death of Aurangzeb, there was a succession of weak rulers who accelerated disintegration of the empire. A despot can succeed only if he is intelligent and industrious, impartial and just and a fair judge of men. If he is found lacking in even one of them evil consequences are bound to follow. Hence despotic monarchies break up sooner or later.

A despotic government last only as long as its principal officers and baronial lords retain a strong sense of loyalty. Personal ambition But men of ability are also generally ambitious. They are aspirants for higher and still higher honours till they reach a stage when they find it difficult to reconcile personal ambitions with loyalty to their master. They are conscious of the fact that their sovereign or his ancestors had not been born with any God-given gifts which marked them out for sovereignty, and that it was by sheer dint of merit and personal exertions that sovereignty was acquired. Hence they are some-times fired with the ambition to ascend to the highest rung in the ladder. This gives birth to rebellions and revolutions. The Empire of the Timurids bears witness to this. Guru Govind Singh, Prince Salim, Shahjahan, Zulfiqar Khan, Asafjah, Ajit Singh and their likes compromised the dignity of the empire only to satisfy their personal ambitions. And ambition is a sentiment ingrained in the nature of man.

Ever since the days of Akbar, the land continued to produce leaders who considered no sacrifice too great for securing local independence. When they were able to mobilise local support in their favour, it became extremely difficult to suppress them. These lovers of freedom contributed to the disintegration of the empire. The Timurids were first looked upon as foreigners so that Bahadur Shah of Gujerat and Sher Khan Sur were able to rope in much greater public support than they. With a mere handful of men, Maharana Pratap defied the imperial ambitions of Akbar. Malik Amber revitalised the kingdom of Ahmadnagar, the Afghan tribes on the frontier never really bowed before the authority of the Emperor while the Jats and the Rajputs tried to set up independent kingdoms of their own. It was to nullify this spirit of independence that Akbar adopted the policy of full liberty of conscience and respect for national sentiments. But this was later reversed and foreigners began to supersede the people of the soil. Its repercussions whipped up patriotic risings once again.

Just about this time, a number of religious reformers too encouraged national uprisings. In Punjab, the Sikh Gurus emphasised the need of acquiring political and military power for the defence of religion. Similarly, in the south Ramdas insisted on acquiring political sovereignty for the defence of Maharashtra Dharma. He said that power resided in organisation and it was by power alone that religion could be defended. He thus rendered a great help to Shivaji in his war of independence. Similarly, the Satnamis, Mahdavis, Roshanias *etc.* engendered a spirit of revolt and promoted the desire for independence.

The disintegration of the empire was inevitable because of its inherent defects, and the indefinite law of succession among the Muslims served to add fuel to fire. The Timurid practice was to recognize the hereditary right of each son to succeed to some part or the other of his father's dominions and thus enjoy a status higher than that of an ordinary governor. And at the same time, they also desired to preserve the unity of the empire by conceding to one of them the imperial status. This was usually reserved for the eldest son. But this arrangement was not always accepted if the eldest son was not the ablest among them and opposition to him became a matter of course. This was further aggravated by the Islamic theory of sovereignty. Theoretically, sovereignty in Islam was elective but in the absence of any definite machinery for election it had come to sanction the elevation of anybody who could capture power by force or fraud and could thus pretend to possess the support of a majority of the leading

men in the state. The net result of all this was that the problem of succession often gave rise to a civil war. From the time of Shahjahan, such wars assumed dangerous proportions. They destroyed the unity of the empire and the Emperor became the leader of a faction so that it was natural for other groups and factions to conspire or rebel against him. The Wars of succession between 1707-1720 put an end to the dignity of the empire and the successors of Muhammad Shah were mere puppets who spent their days as the proteges of their so called servants.

As if this was not enough, there also started a series of foreign invasions. These invaders came both by land and by sea. Nadir Shah Durrani and Amad Shah Abdali came from the north-west but neither of them aimed at founding an empire in India. By sea came the European traders from a number of countries. Most of them had originally come as traders but on staying on they realized that if they took part in local politics they could secure not only better trading facilities but also territorial possessions. Hence the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the English began to form plans for territorial aggrandisement. The Portuguese were the first to enter the field. Others tried to emulate their example. In course of time, the power of the Portuguese declined and the French and the English acquired prominence. Finally, the English built up their supremacy in India by defeating the French and their Indian allies and the whole of the north and the south passed under their sway while the power of the Timurids continued to decline further and further till it almost reached the vanishing point. In the end they finally deposed Bahadur Shah, deported him to Rangoon and declared the British monarch as the imperial sovereign of India.

When the empire began to break up, independent local dynasties began to be found throughout the land. In the Punjab, there was a contest between the Marathas and Abdali for supremacy, but this passed to the control of the Sikhs who began by founding a number of chieftaincies which were brought under the leadership of the *Khalsa*. Kashmir and Sindh became independent. Kabul and Ghazni came under Persian occupation but they were later occupied by Ahmad Shah Abdali who found the independent kingdom of Afghanistan with frontiers more or less the same as of modern Afghanistan. In Rajasthan, Ajit Singh of Marwar, Sawai Jay Singh of Amber and the Maharanas of Mewar never formally repudiated the sovereignty of the Mughal Emperors but they were no longer their vassals and took an active part in seating and unseating puppet emperors. Thus practically

the whole of Rajasthan became independent under local dynasties. The same applied to Baghel and Bundel chiefs as well. Badan Singh and Suraj Mal Jat founded the kingdom of Bharatpur which played an important part in the subsequent history of India. Modern Uttar Pradesh was divided between the Rohillas in the west, the Nawabs of Oudh in the east and the Marathas in the south. Alivardi Khan founded an independent nawabship in Bihar and Bengal to which was soon added a part of Orissa also. Gujerat and Malwa were for some time ruled by governors in nominal subordination to the Emperor but they too soon passed under Maratha control and the ruling houses of the Gaekwar, the Peshwa, the Sindhia and the Holkar were founded. In the South, the Marathas were the most powerful of all. Under the leadership of the Peshwas, the Maratha power reached its pinnacle of glory. Most of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Bombay (modern Maharashtra) passed under their sway and they led repeated raids into northern India with a view to bring the Emperor under their tutelage. But there were three other powers in the Deccan. The Nizam of Hyderabad, who while nominally acknowledging the sovereignty of the Emperor entertained hopes of bringing the whole of the Deccan under his domination. Mysore had an independent Hindu kingdom which later acquired great power under Haidar Ali and Tippu. The Nawab of Carnatic, though nominally subordinate to the Nizam, acted like an independent prince. There were besides, a multitude of petty Rajas and Nawabs whose positions were dubious and subject to change from time to time. They would sometimes become the vassals of the Marathas and at others court the aid of the Nizam or lean on the support of foreign companies or rulers of Mysore.

Among them, only the Marathas under favourable circumstances, could found an all-India kingdom. They even made a bid for it. But the *chhatrapati* and the *Peshwa* could not exercise sufficient control over their lieutenants. They quarrelled among themselves and their invasions degenerated into mere plundering raids which alienated the sympathies of the Rajputs in particular and the local population in general. The Nizam and Haidar Ali continued to fight and conspire against them in order to secure their respective interests. The French and the English also joined the fray, and they gradually established their own supremacy by defeating both the Marathas and their adversaries. Thus the disintegration of the empire paved the ground for the establishment of a foreign power in India which held the land in political, cultural and economic bondage for over a hundred and fifty years.

The disintegration of the empire had far-reaching consequences on the social, cultural and economic life of the land. There was such a universal chaos that plunder and rapine

became a part of the political system of the day. Constant movement of troops throughout the length and breadth of the land jeopardised the security of life, property and honour of the people. Agriculture was neglected and scenes of desolation spotlighted the land. Although local patrons multiplied, there was a general decline in arts and letters. Craftsmen and skilled labour also suffered. They gradually passed under the control of foreign trading companies which in alliance with or in defiance of the local political authority started a virtual loot and devised various artifices to deny them a fair price for their handicrafts. The Indian business community suffered a decline. Foreign trading companies secured special privileges from the *Peshwa*, the local rulers or the nominal Emperors which made it impossible for Indian traders to compete with them on terms of equality. The disintegration of the empire was, thus, highly detrimental to the land and its people.

CHAPTER XIV

REBELLIONS OF JATS AND RAJPUTS

Although Akbar had adopted a generous attitude towards the Rajputs which made most of their Rajas and Chief supporters well-wishers of his dynasty and empire, there were still certain elements which could and did actually lead to disaffection among them. Akbar had no doubt restored their kingdoms to them but he regarded them as part of his dominions and considered himself responsible for their peace and good government. His successors also acted on the same principle. This led to consequences which the Rajputs regarded as prejudicial to their interests. For example, in official records, their states were described as Sarkars or subdivisions of Sarkars of a Mughal province like Ajmer and the rulers were described not as Rajas or Maharajas but as Zamindars of the locality concerned. This was not in consonance with their dignity and family pride. Then the Emperor had established his military outposts in a number of forts formerly belonging to the Rajputs and could be a cause for dissatisfaction. Thirdly, when a Raja died, his successor was approved by the Emperor and invested with ruling powers in a ceremonious fashion. Upto the time of Aurangzeb, it was a practice for the Emperor to put a *tilak* on his forehead as a symbol of his approval and elevation to the *gaddi*. Sometimes, his decision appeared unjust to the local people and other princes and led to local disaffection. Fourthly, the Emperor took a number of subordinates of the Raja into his service and would sometimes in expressing his approbation of their services grant them an autonomous *jagir* within their master's territory in utter disregard to their wishes. This reduced the power of the Raja and led to the formation of new states or Thikanas. For example, in 1569, Rao Surjan Hada and in 1581 Rao Durga received such elevations and were recognized as autonomous chiefs of Ranthambhor and Rampura respectively. In the reign of Jahangir, an autonomous state of Kishangarh was carved out of the State of Jodhpur under Krishna Singh while in the reign of Shahjahan when Madhava Singh was assigned the *jagir* of Kota, Bundi was partitioned to form a separate state of Kota.

Another important cause of dissatisfaction among the Rajputs was racial pride and mutual rivalry. They regarded themselves superior or at best equal to other nobles. But after the

death of Akbar and revolt of Khusrav with suspected complicity of Man Singh, the political importance of the Rajputs suffered an eclipse and they were generally given no post higher than that of a deputy governor or *Faujdar*, while in times of war, the chief command was almost invariably entrusted to a Musalman and in comparison to the Muslims they received a much lower percentage of higher *mansabs*.

The descendants of Akbar revised their matrimonial policy as well. The principal wives of both Akbar and Jahangir included Rajput princesses as well. Akbar had thought that as a result of these marriages, the Rajputs will become permanent allies and honoured relatives of the ruling dynasty. He had, therefore, celebrated the first marriage of his heir with a Rajput princess Manbai, the daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das in 1585 with great pomp and show. In 1586 came the second marriage of Salim with Jodhbai or Jagat Gosain, the daughter of Raja Uday Singh of Jodhpur. Similarly, he was made to espouse the daughters of Raja Ray Singh of Bikaner and Raja Kalyan of Jaisalmer. After his accession, Jahangir married two more Rajput princesses—the daughter of Jagat Singh, eldest son of Raja Man Singh of Amber and the daughter of Ramachandra Bundela. But none of the possible heirs of Jahangir had a Rajput wife. None of the wives of Shahjahan or Aurangzeb was a Rajput. Consequently, the Rajputs no longer commanded the same respect at court which they had formerly enjoyed. They might have even felt mortified at this deliberate neglect after they had been forced to depart from the orthodox Hindu practice.

Under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, the religious policy of the Emperor gradually became more and more intolerant and the Hindus suffered great persecution, and as will be related later, this affected the attitude of the Rajputs. These causes of discontent did not have the same effect everywhere at the same time. Had this been so, the subsequent history of Rajasthan would have been quite different. The Rajputs were almost throughout divided by mutual dissensions, jealousies and rivalries and each one of them sought to steal a march over others by ingratiating himself in the favour of the emperor. Hence they could not ordinarily resort to revolt. Instead, they were, very often, prepared to sacrifice honour to ambition. This is the reason why Rajput revolts were few and far between, and they only tried to assert their independence when they found the emperor to be palpably unjust or a mere puppet in the hands of unscrupulous nobles at court.

The revolts that took place earlier were not of much consequence. Thus, in the reign of Jahangir, Raja Ray Singh of Bikaner and his son Dalpat Singh rose in revolt, but on being defeated offered an apology and the Emperor restored Ray

Revolts against
Jahangir

Ray Singh to his original status. Ramachandra Bundela, brother of Vir Singh Bundela rose in revolt out of jealousy against favours shown to the latter by Jahangir but later sought to conciliate the Emperor by offering his daughter in marriage to him.

In the reign of Shahjahan, the Bundelas rose in revolt once against but this was comparatively far more dangerous.

When Vir Singh died in 1627, he was succeeded by his eldest son Jujhar Singh. He went to Agra to offer his presents and congratulations to Shahjahan on his elevation to the imperial throne. During his absence, his son Vikramajit started persecuting the older officers and one of them Kripa Ram Gaur effected his escape from prison and fled to the imperial court. Kripa Ram sought to avenge himself by complaining to the Emperor against Bundela misrule and painted their oppressions in lurid colours. He also informed the Emperor that Vir Singh Bundela had left behind an enormous fortune. This worked up Shahjahan who treated Jujhar Singh well but ordered a scrutiny of his father's accounts and sought to seize his property, pending enquiry. This alarmed Jujhar Singh and he fled to Orchha.

The Emperor was mighty offended at this unseemly behaviour of Jujhar Singh and with a view to inflict an exemplary punishment on him sent Mahabat Khan, Bahadur Khan and Abdullah Khan at the head of 25,000 soldiers for the invasion of his kingdom from the north, south and east. Pahar Singh and Raja Bharat Bundela were also sent with them and the Emperor adopted such a stiff attitude as if he would set aside Jujhar Singh and his children altogether and replace them by some other Bundela prince. Jujhar Singh first put up a gallant resistance but when he was overwhelmed by the superior might of the emperor he sued for peace. He presented himself before the Emperor in February 1629 and offered 40 elephants and 15 lakhs of rupees as an indemnity for war. This satisfied the Emperor who forgave him and he was restored to the original *mansab* of 4000 but his *jagir* was reduced and the districts thus seized were assigned to other officers, including Pahar Singh, a brother of Jujhar Singh himself.

After this, Jujhar Singh spent most of his time in the imperial wars in the Deccan and the Emperor was so satisfied by his meritorious services that he promoted him to the rank of a first class *punjhazari*. In 1634, he returned to Orchha leaving his son in the service of the Emperor and began to plan the extension of his territory. He attacked Prem Narayan, the Gond chief of Chauragarh and a tributary vassal of the Emperor and despite imperial orders for suspension of fighting pressed on till he captured Chauragarh eight months later.

Prem Narayan was assured personal safety but was subsequently murdered. The son of Prem Narayan referred the matter to the Emperor who did not approve of Jujhar Singh's impudence but as he was engaged in a war in the Deccan he did not want to imperil his communications by driving Jujhar Singh into revolt. Besides, he had not forgotten the services he had recently rendered. He, therefore, sent a *farman* to him asserting his rights as overlord of Prem Narayan and demanded from him the surrender of Prem Narayan's territory and ten lakhs of rupees captured from his treasury to imperial agents. Jujhar Singh was unwilling to part with the fruits of his labour for the mere asking. Hence it was decided to take action against him.

Once again the imperial armies entered his state from three sides. When Jujhar Singh lost all hope of success, he concealed his treasure in the forests and wells, destroyed all other valuable property and fled to Golkunda. But the Gonds tracked him to his place of refuge and killed him. His son Jagraj was also killed and the heads of the father and the son were sent to the Emperor. All the forts in Bundelkhand and Chauragarh were occupied by imperial agents and the members of Jujhar Singh's family were captured and thrown into prison. About a crore of rupees was secured from hidden and over-ground treasures. But the Emperor was not pacified even by the death and confiscation of the property of Jujhar Singh. The famous temple at Orchha was razed to the ground. Durgabhan, the son and Durjansal and the grandson of Jujhar Singh were converted to Islam and rechristened Islam Quli and Ali Quli while his other sons Uday Bhan and Shyamdeva were executed on refusing to embrace Islam. The ladies of his family were enslaved and forced to lead a life of dishonour. And Devi Singh, the son of Raja Bharat was assigned the state of Orchha.

Religious persecution by Shahjahan caused such a wave of discontent among the Bundelas that they had no respect for Devi Singh, the imperial stooge. Taking advantage of this situation, Champat Ray Bundela, a descendant of Vir Singh's brother Udayjit the founder of the Mahewa line of Bundela chiefs set up Prithwiraj, a son of Jujhar Singh as the claimant to the *gaddi* of Orchha and initiated a war on his behalf. With local support he continued to defy the arms of the Emperor till 1642 when Prithwiraj was captured and beheaded. Finally, through the mediation of Pahar Singh, Champat Ray agreed to enrol himself as an imperial *mansabdar* and the rebellion came to an end. In the reign of Aurangzeb, he started a rebellion again, but was overpowered and killed in 1661.

Revolt of Champat Ray Bundela (1639-1642)

Chhatrasal, the son of Champat Ray had entered the service of Mirza Raja Jay Singh while still in his teens and had secured the *mansab* of 1000 by virtue of the Rajas' favour and his own merits. But he was very ambitious and very eager to follow in the footsteps of Shivaji to carve out for himself an independent state in Bundelkhand. Taking advantage of Aurangzeb's harsh and fanatical policy towards the Hindus, Chhatrasal raised the standard of revolt in 1661. The Bundelas looked upon him as the defender of the Hindu faith and the honour of the Rajputs. They therefore gave him an enthusiastic support. Sujan Singh, the ruler of Orchha offered him encouragement and promised to lend him secret support. By 1697, he acquired such fame and importance that the Emperor was induced to grant him a pardon and to enrol him among his *mansabdars*. In the reign of Bahadur Shah (1707-1712), he first defied his authority but later came to terms with him. Farrukhsiyar (1713-1719) gave him the *mansab* of 6000 *Zat*, 4000 *Sawar* in 1714 which further enhanced his prestige. He thereafter gradually acquired control over the whole of eastern Bundelkhand. In the reign of Muhammad Shah (1720-1748) strenuous efforts were made to suppress him but he held his own by allying himself with the Marathas and ceding to them a part of his territory as the price for their support. This ushered into existence the states of Panna and Jaitpur and removed all vestiges of imperial authority over this region.

In the reign of Aurangzeb, a most serious Rajput uprising took place in Jodhpur. Maharaja Jaswant Singh was one of the premier nobles of the reign of Shah-jahan and held the *mansab* of 7000 *Zat*, 7000 *Sawar*. In the war of succession fought among the sons of Shahjahan, Jaswant Singh's sympathy with the anti-Aurangzeb group and that is why he had to change sides on a number of occasions. But in the end, he composed his differences with the successful candidate. Aurangzeb on his part confirmed him in the *mansab* he had held and gave up the idea of deposing him from the *gaddi* of Jodhpur. But Aurangzeb and Jaswant Singh were never sincerely reconciled to one another. Jaswant Singh openly opposed his anti-Hindu measures, never fought against Shivaji with earnestness and zeal and picked up such intimacy with Prince Muazzam that the Emperor got suspicious about him and sent him away as *Faujdar* to Jamrud. Jaswant Singh died in 1678 but during this period of 20 years his *mansab* remained the same.

When Jaswant Singh died, he was survived by no son. Taking advantage of this situation, the Emperor sent his generals to occupy Jodhpur. But in order to mollify the Rathors,

he nominated Indra Singh, the grandson of Raja Jaswant Singh's Bmar Singo as the ruler of Jodhpur and granted him a *mansab* of 4000. Indra Singh in return offered to present the Emperor 36 lakhs of rupees for this favour. In the meantime, the Muslim officers sent to the assistance of Indra Singh started persecuting the Hindus and destroying their temples. So that the new administration could not gain popular support.

Just then came the news that the late Maharaja's wives had given birth to two posthumous sons one of whom had since died while the other named Ajit Singh survived. The Jodhpuri sardars desired that this same boy should be accepted as the ruler of Jodhpur and that during his minority the administration of the state should be entrusted to a regency council consisting of principal Rathor nobles. But when Prince Ajit, the two widowed queens and the late Maharaja's servants and Samants reached Delhi, the Emperor sought to detain them at the capital and to continue the administrative set up as before. On learning of this, Durga Das Rathor dressed up two women as queens and left an obscure child with them while he along with the Prince and the queens fled *post haste* to Marwar. Aurangzeb gave out that the real Ajit was at the court and was being brought up to be invested as the Maharaja of Jodhpur on attaining majority while Durga Das's protege was a fictitious child of obscure origin. Later on, the boy that was being brought up as Ajit was converted to Islam and was rechristened Muhammadiraj.

These events revolutionised the entire situation. Durga Das and his companions succeeded in escorting their master's heir to Marwar at a grave risk to their own lives. On hearing of Durga Das's success, many Rathor warriors began to flock round him, and the power of Indra Singh began to break up. But the Emperor, unwilling to relax his hold over Marwar, set aside Indra Singh and sent Prince Akbar and Tahawwur Khan the *faujdar* of Ajmer at the head of an army to occupy Marwar while he himself lay encamped at Ajmer. The army fanned out to occupy the whole of the kingdom, different officers being told to capture and hold its different districts. Imperial officers were appointed to govern the state and military outposts were established at convenient centres. The kingdom of Jodhpur was thus annexed and made *khalsa*. The process of converting temples into mosques was now further accelerated.

The Emperor next tried to seduce the Rathor nobles by promises of gold and office and succeeded in winning over some of them. But Durga Das was determined to seat Ajit on the *gaddi* of Jodhpur. He used all his strength and resources to organise opposition against the imperial agents, to

harass Mughal outposts and improve his condition by fruitful diplomacy. He appealed to the sense of honour of all those Rathor officers who had changed sides and exhorted them to return to duty while Ajit's mother a Sisodiya Princess appealed to Rana Raj Singh of Mewar for succour and assistance.

Maharana Raj Singh scented danger to the security of his state from the movements of the Emperor. He was also offended by the demand for *jizya*. Besides chivalry and self-interest alike recommended a ready response to his sister's urgent call for help and the Rana therefore decided to collaborate with Durga Das against the Emperor and preparations for war began. The forest clad foot-hills of the Aravalli were selected as the base of operations. He ordered his subjects to move into the forests and hills, destroying all that they could not carry and which could be of use to the enemy. Udaypur was evacuated. No sooner did the Emperor get this news than he invaded Mewar and made Ajmer his headquarters to direct the operations. The Rathors and the Sisodiyas opened the campaign with such violent guerilla attacks against the imperial outposts that the Mughal soldiers began to lose nerve. But, as time passed, more and more troops poured into Marwar and Mewar and the stranglehold against the Rajput bases began to tighten. Even this caused no dismay to Raj Singh or Durga Das

Durga Das now tried to win over Prince Akbar whose failure in Mewar and Marwar had brought him violent rebukes from the Emperor. It was in this frame of mind that Durga Das tried to impress on him that his father's policy of religious intolerance was bound to foment rebellion throughout the land and would ultimately destroy both the Emperor and the empire. But if the Prince followed in the footsteps of his great ancestor whose name he bore and tried to govern the land in collaboration with the Rajputs, he could still salvage the empire from certain ruin. He reasoned that the Emperor did have a strong escort at Ajmer and if the Prince sincerely collaborated with the Rathors and the Sisodiyas to make a bold attack on the Emperor, he could easily defeat and depose his aged father to mount the throne and immortalise his name in Indian history by reversing his policy of religious persecution and intolerance. The Prince was young and ambitious, while in medieval Muslim dynasties family ties had so often been disregarded to subserve one's self-interest that Akbar agreed to take up arms against his father.

But the Emperor's stars were still in the ascendant. Maharana Raj Singh died while negotiations with Akbar were being concluded and his successor Maharana Jay Singh took time before he could send his forces. Then, when the Rajputs had mobilised full support, Akbar did not move with alacrity giving

the Emperor sufficient time to call in reinforcements from all quarters. His spies were constantly active and doing everything to seduce some of Akbar's supporters. When the two rival armies came face to face, Aurangzeb succeeded in enticing Tahawwur Khan to his camp by promises of favour and threats of punishment, and had him executed for his treasonable part in negotiating an alliance between Akbar and the Rajputs. Then he had a letter drafted and so arranged that it fell into the hands of Durga Das. It read: "Well done my son. You have well trapped the *Kafirs*. When fighting starts in the morning, keep them in the van so that while I attack them from the front you may attack them from the rear and we may annihilate the enemy completely." Durga Das suspected its veracity and went to Akbar to consult him about it. But the Prince was sleeping dead drunk with instructions to his attendants not to disturb him. The mediating Tahawwur was also missing. This alarmed the Rajputs and they marched away by night to a safe distance. But they took necessary precautions for the safety of the Prince and arranged for his safe escort to their camp.

Akbar had himself proclaimed Emperor and as certain Mullahs had given the *fatwa* in favour of deposing Aurangzeb, Akbar's flight to the south the latter brooked no delay in suppressing the Rajputs. He gave them a pursuit and Durga Das was forced to seek Maratha aid. As related earlier, he tried to secure the active co-operation of Shambhuji by inducing Akbar to offer him the post of the Vakil of the empire and braving all dangers and difficulties escorted the Prince safely to the Konkan.

This report increased the worries of the Emperor, who realized the need of immediately proceeding to the south. But it was even more urgent to end or Jay Singh comes to terms limit the war in Rajasthan. Meanwhile Maharana Jay Singh directed his efforts and troops to raid Malwa and Gujerat and seized the supplies proceeding to the imperial camp and met with some success. But Mewar was fast becoming a desolate tract so that a long prolonged war was not possible. With this situation on both sides a treaty was negotiated between the Maharana and the Emperor. The latter recognized Jay Singh as the rightful ruler of Mewar, withdrew his troops from the kingdom and agreed to accept a district in lieu of *jizya*. Later on, in order to secure the Maharana's co-operation in the wars in the Deccan, the Emperor restored the aforesaid district to him and waived the demand for *jizya* as well. The author of Vir Vinod refers to certain letters of Prince Azam and suggests, that on their basis the Emperor accepted these terms only on Azam's intercession and in the hope of securing active support of the Rajputs in his Deccan campaigns. The reason why Azam took up the cause of the

Rana was that he had concluded a secret alliance with him by which the Rana agreed to support him in the war of succession while he in his turn promised to grant the Rana many favours and the *mansab* of 7000. It appears that the Rana desisted from supporting the Rathors although he did not participate in the Deccan wars and instead tried to get this term revoked.

The Emperor was now left to suppress the Rathors only. This he entrusted to the care of his generals while he himself proceeded to the Deccan never to return again. His twenty five years' war in the Deccan had impaired his power. Rathors triumph and Ajit is recognised Maharaja the Deccan had impaired his power. This proved a great blessing to the Rathors who succeeded not only in defending themselves but also in occupying certain districts held by the imperialists. In 1698 and 1705 the Emperor tried to pacify Ajit Singh and Durga Das by grant of *mansabs* and *jagirs* but they would accept nothing short of Jodhpur. Hence the war in Rajasthan continued. In 1707 when Ajit heard of the death of the Emperor, he launched an attack on Jodhpur. Aurangzeb's sons were locked in a mutual struggle for succession. This enabled Ajit Singh to capture his kingdom without serious difficulty. All Muslims were either killed or driven out and all the mosques were destroyed. When Bahadur Shah was crowned, Ajit took no notice of him but when he found that his power was gradually gaining in strength and stability, he came to terms with the new Emperor who recognized him as the lawful ruler of Jodhpur in 1708.

These wars in Rajasthan caused the empire grievous losses while Rajputs could not be used against the Marathas. In other states discontent against the Emperor began to mount and in many areas roving bands of bold robbers made their appearance. They paralysed the normal working of the state and the dignity of the empire suffered a great set-back. The success of the Rajputs was mainly due to the leadership of Durga Das who had the rare combination of the qualities of a great general and a shrewd diplomat and he conducted the war of independence with great tact and intelligence and courage and fortitude. He allied himself with neighbouring and like-minded people so that the force of the Emperor was diverted and diffused and he could not bring about the destruction of Marwar with a single-minded determination. Rich tributes have been paid by all to his high talents as a resourceful and energetic leader.

Mughal suzerainty over Marwar now practically came to an end. Its rulers were fully autonomous as far as internal administration was concerned. They, however, continued to furnish contingents for military service, only when they found

it profitable for themselves and their respect for the Emperor was conditioned by their self-interest. In 1715, Ajit Singh furnished proof of his subordination by offering his daughter in marriage to the Emperor. He fraternised with the Sayyad Brothers to secure the grant of Bikaner and the governorship first of Gujerat and then of Ajmer. On such occasions, he feigned respect for the Emperor. But it was now recognized by everybody that it was not so difficult to secure the grant of a *jagir* or a governorship of a province as to retain it firmly in one's possessions, because the local people could successfully defy the imperial order, or the Emperor himself under pressure of a powerful man could cancel his former *farman* and issue a fresh one in favour of anybody else. Ajit Singh thus secured the governorship of Gujerat in 1715 but in 1717 it was assigned to another person, while the very next year when the Emperor required Ajit Singh's co-operation, he offered Gujerat to him once again and in addition honoured him with the title of Raj Rajeshwar.

After the death of Aurangzeb, other rulers of Rajasthan secured independence although they would occasionally show reverence for the Emperor and even offer present to him and his *wazir* in order to secure a convenient *farman* in their favour.

In Punjab, northern Rajasthan, western Uttar Pradesh and the Jumna basin almost to the confines of Gwalior, the Jats were

the dominant race. They were well built and had a virile constitution. Most of them were peaceful husbandmen who led a quiet life and loved to be left alone. But they made excellent soldiers. Upto the beginning of the reign of Aurangzeb, Jats had no political importance in the land. But the religious intolerance of the Emperor and the disturbed conditions in the locality enabled them to form an independent government of their own. Abd-ul-nabi, the *faujdar* of Mathura in literal obedience to the orders of the Emperor erected a mosque in the central part of the city and then destroyed the wall enclosing the Keshava Ray Temple. This led to a rising in 1669 under the leadership of Gokul Jat and Abd-ul-nabi was killed in the course of fighting. The Emperor then sent another army and the rebellion was suppressed. Gokul was carried away as a prisoner to Agra and was hacked to pieces and the members of his family were converted to Islam while the local people were subjected to terrible reprisals.

Consequently, in the absence of a competent and acknowledged leader, the Emperor succeeded in putting down the rebellion by his over whelming might and peace was apparently restored for the time being; but the Jats remained unreconciled at heart. A few years later, Raja Ram became their leader and organised

plundering raids and levied a cess from all wayfarers. The Emperor's absence in the Deccan furnished him an excellent opportunity to gather strength but in 1688, he was killed in fighting and the Jats were once more suppressed.

Churaman succeeded as the next leader. Among the earlier Jat leaders, Churaman was the ablest, the boldest and the most tactful. He gathered a large following and led distant raids. He fraternised with all rebels against the Emperor. Increasing success added to the strength of his following and the sphere of his influence. In 1707 and 1713, during the wars of succession, he freely despoiled the weaker party which added both to his strength and popularity. In the reign of Farukhsiyar, an attempt was first made to suppress him by force but it ended in failure and he was appointed guardian of the road from Delhi to the *Chambal*. He took such undue advantage of this privilege that complaints began to pour in against him and Sawai Raja Jay Singh was deputed to suppress him. The war lasted from 1716 to 1718 but as Churaman bribed the *wazir* in his favour, Jay Singh did not succeed in his venture and fighting was suspended on Churaman's promising to pay a sum of 50 lakh rupees.

In the reign of Muhammad Shah, Sawai Jay Singh completely destroyed the power of the Jats. Churaman had died and his sons were driven away. The mantle now fell on his nephew Badan Singh who raised the Jats from the status of bold robbers to an organised state. Badan Singh submitted to Sawai Jay Singh and sought his protection. His humility won him the favour of Jay Singh to such an extent that he procured for him the right of guarding the roads between Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. Impressed by his unflinching loyalty, obedience and valour, Jay Singh allowed him a free hand in consolidating his power in the Jat majority areas. Badan Singh put an end to the anarchic conditions of the days of Churaman and compelled all Jat leaders and Zamindars to submit to his authority and take up agriculture or military service in a disciplined manner. It seems he stumbled on a rich hidden treasure which he utilized in building many strong forts, chief among them being the forts of Dig and Bharatpur. He organised a cavalry force and furnished his forts with guns, ammunition and other essential supplies with such profusion that according to contemporary standards, they became almost invincible. His strength and loyalty made Jay Singh his sincere supporter but he declined to go to the imperial court to secure any promotion in rank and was content to call himself only 'Thakur'. Jay Singh put a *tilak* on his forehead and conferred on him the title of '*Brajraj*' which enhanced his prestige still more. His adopted son and successor was Surajmal and was a leader in peace and war ever since the days of his father. He never quarrelled with the Emperor. For this in 1752, Badan Singh was given the

rank of a Raja and the honorific of Mahendra and Surajmal was appointed the *Faujdar* of Mathura.

Thus was created a powerful separate kingdom of the Jats. Surajmal was not only an able and valiant warrior but also a farsighted statesman who added to the strength and resources of this state still further. That is why he was able to defend himself both against the Afghans and the Marathas, and the kingdom of the Jats continued to prosper under him although its foundation deprived the Emperor of real authority over lands almost on the very gates of the capital.

The circumstances leading to the rebellions of the Jats and the Rajputs high-lights the fact that a little indiscretion and persistence in a wrong policy could convert friends into foes and peaceful husbandmen into flaming warriors. As noticed in the foregoing pages, this was principally due to Aurangzeb's policy of religious intolerance and what he had done for the glory of Islam turned out to be the cause of ruin of the empire. Despite this, no people endeavoured as much to perpetuate the power of the Emperor even during the period of decline and fall of the empire as the Rajputs, and in this connection the name of Sawai Jay Singh stands most illustrious.

Further Readings:

1. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*, Chaptees II, V and IX.
2. Sasena—*History of Shahjahan of Dihli*, Chapter. IV.
3. Sarkar—*History of Aurangzeb*, Vol. III.
4. Sarker—*Short History of Aurangzeb*, Chapters. VIII, IX and XVII.
5. Irvine—*Later Mughals* (Ed. by Sarkar) Vols. I & II.
6. Sarkar—*Fall of the Mughal Empire* Vols. I & II.
7. Gorelal—*Bundelkhand ka Itihas*.
8. Vishweshwar Nath Reu—*Marwar ka Itihas* Vol. I. pp. 210-358.
9. G. S. Ojha—*Rajputana ka Itihas*. Vol. I. pp. 274-278.
10. Qanungo—*History of the Jats*.
11. G. S. Ojha—*Udaypur Rajya Ka Itihas*, Vol. II.

CHAPTER XV

RISE OF THE SIKHS

In the last decades of the 15th century a great social reformer started the work of regenerating the people of the Punjab. This was Guru Nanak, born in the year 1469 in a Khatri family of Talwandi, a place of pilgrimage for the Sikhs and called Nanakana. Nanak's parents were men of very humble means. From a worldly point of view, Nanak's boyhood and early youth was a complete failure for he showed proficiency neither in book-learning nor in tending the cattle, agriculture, trade or service. The reason for this was that he did not apply his mind to any of them. His contemplative nature was ever engrossed in knotty spiritual problems. Finally, he had a call from within and he began his true mission. He preached the doctrine of *Nirguna* Monotheism and rejected all artificial distinctions between man and man as Hindu and Muslim, Brahmin and Shudra, high and low, for they all were the slaves of a common master and fraternal in relation. He laid special stress on sincerity, purity and single-minded devotion to God and rejected the efficacy of ritual and ceremony. He had such sweet reasonableness, cultured urbanity and transparent sincerity and affection for all that the number of his followers soon began to mount. Guru Nanak was friendly to all and described orthodox Mullas and Pandit as misguided but no enemies. He is said to have met Emperor Babar who was highly impressed by his saintly qualities.

For the perpetuation of his work, Nanak nominated one of his disciples whom he called Angad as his successor. After Nanak's death in 1538, he became the second Guru and was followed by Amardas and Ramdas.

By the time of Ramdas, the Sikhs became a distinct sect who looked upon their Guru as the incarnations of God and believed in the doctrine of metempsychosis which meant that the soul of Nanak had travelled through the bodies of Angad, Amardas, Ramdas and the later Gurus to the last Guru Govind Singh. Thus while the body of the Guru tended to change, the soul remained the same. The majority of the Sikhs were Jats, a simple, industrious and a bold race, who had great reverence for the Guru and were ready to sacrifice everything for him.

Nanak, Angad and Amardas lived like recluses and devoted their attention to spiritual elevation to the utter neglect of worldly pomp and show though their successors of Nanak they were all householder. But from the time of Guru Ramdas, wealth began to accumulate with the Gurus. Ramdas himself led such a simple and pious life that Akbar granted him 500 bighas of land which he utilized for building the Amritsar tank and temple. Ramdas was the son-in-law of the previous Guru Amardas. He nominated his own son Arjun as his successor.

The Guruship of Arjun witnessed a number of developments which had a profound effect on the subsequent history of the Sikhs. The office of the Guru now became hereditary which was not a very wholesome practice for a religious and spiritual brotherhood because it was bound to entail disputes about succession. Prithwichand, the elder brother of Arjun claimed the Guruship for himself on grounds of primogeniture. But his personal character lacked the charm that Arjun possessed. Hence his opposition did not affect the arrangement.

Guru Arjun acquired wide popularity and high fame for his piety and character so that the number of his followers greatly increased. It was said that from Kabul to Dacca that there was hardly an important town which did not contain his disciples. For their guidance and instruction, Guru Arjun compiled the *Adi-Granth* which contained the important utterances of the Sikh Gurus and some other eminent saints and included some of his own compositions as well. These last deserve to be ranked among the finest religious poetry.

Guru Arjun was bold and fearless and refused to do anything improper because of fear or consideration for others, with the result that when a person named Chandu or Danichand pressed for the inclusion of his compositions in the *Granth* or the marriage of his daughter with the Guru's son, he flatly refused. This antagonised him so much that he started planning and intriguing to humiliate Arjun by replacing him by his brother Prithwichand.

Guru Arjun combined true saintliness with external magnificence. The simplicity of a recluse made room for right royal magnificence in dress, and he collected a huge fortune by large-scale trading and imposing a tithe on all the Sikhs.

He was also accused by certain Hindus of reviling their incarnations and by the Muslims of misrepresenting the Prophet. Thus they both charged him of distorting their religious doctrines and calumniating those they held in reverence. But no intrigue or false propaganda had any effect on the Guru. Unruffled by what others thought or did, he stuck to what he considered to be true and right. Just then occurred the rebellion of Khusrav in 1606 who suffered a

defeat and fled to the Punjab. Guru Arjun took pity on his miserable plight and gave him some money. His enemies used it as a convenient handle to encompass his disgrace. They represented to the local officers and through them to the Emperor that he was guilty of open defiance of the authority of the Emperor inasmuch as he had helped the rebel Prince with money and had blessed his enterprise with success. Under the influence of these persons, Jahangir ordered the Guru to pay a fine of two lakhs of rupees, but he refused to pay and was arrested and executed.

This incident had a tremendous influence on the history of the Sikhs. That the Guru was indiscreet in offering money to the rebel Prince admits of no doubt. But if in the view of the consistent saintliness of the Guru, Jahangir had let him off with a mere warning it would have met the ends of justice. Although Jahangir took no action against the Sikhs as a body and punished the Guru in his personal capacity alone, the Sikhs looked upon this as the beginning of the persecution of their sect by the Mughal Emperors.

After the death of Guru Arjun his brother sought to secure the succession in his favour, but the Sikhs chose Har-

Guru Hargovind
(1606-1645)

govind, the son of the deceased Guru. Hargovind had great fondness for pomp and show and was first to introduce military training

to the Sikhs, and adopt the feudal mode of living. For some time, he took service under Jahangir but was imprisoned on detection of some irregularity in his accounts. Shahjahan released him from prison, but later again, there was an estrangement because of his military ambitions and addiction to hunting. His early successes brought him more and more armed retainers but the Sikhs had not yet developed the power to withstand the Emperor. Hence he had to spend his last years in Kashmir hills.

Guru Hargovind proclaimed his grandson Hararay as his successor. Under his leadership the military character of the

Guru Hararay
(1645-1661)

Sikhs remained unaffected. But he generally preferred peace and did not embroil himself in any disputes with the Emperor. Aurangzeb

too in return, took no serious umbrage against his assistance to Dara and pardoned him on this expressing regrets and sending his son Ramray as a hostage to the capital.

On Hararay's death, there was dispute for succession. Ramray even sought assistance from the Emperor, but he did

Guru Harkishan
(1661-1664)

not succeed in the attempt and his brother Har Kishan was accepted as the Guru. Har

Kishan died in 1664 without leaving any clear directions about his successor. Hence a dispute regarding succession started but Tegh Bahadur the youngest son of Hargovind was finally accepted as the Guru.

Because of Ramray's opposition, Guru Tegh Bahadur had to take special care to enter into the good books of Aurangzeb. It was possibly for this reason that he entered the imperial service and took part in a number of wars on behalf of the Emperor. He then returned to the Punjab and started living in great style. He called himself '*Sachcha Padshah*' (the true sovereign). According to the Sikh principles, the Guru was venerated even more than God. Hence, in the spiritual context, none other than the Guru could be their true sovereign. But the Sikh Guru had something of an army and the paraphernalia of temporal royalty as well. Consequently, it was not unlikely for the common man to feel that he regarded himself as the *Sachcha Padshah* in the political sense as well. The enemies of Tegh Bahadur complained of this to the Emperor. Hence he was arrested and when he refused to embrace Islam, he was killed. In this connection, tradition holds that it was alleged against him that he claimed miraculous powers. He was, therefore, ordered either to demonstrate his miraculous powers as a proof of his saintliness or make a choice between death and conversion to Islam. To this Tegh Bahadur replied that he wore an amulet round his neck which gave him immunity against the stroke of any lethal weapon. To test its veracity he was struck with a sword which severed his head from his body and killed him. The amulet was found to contain the formula '*Sar dad sirre na dad*' that is 'though I sacrificed my head I did not reveal my secrets'. This made a martyr of him and the Sikhs became bitterly hostile to the Emperor.

Causes of the
death of Guru
Tegh Bahadur

The Sikhs ascribe the death of Tegh Bahadur to Aurangzeb's fanatical intolerance, and there version of the incident of his death is:

The Emperor had started a programme of wholesale conversion of the Hindus by pressure and promises of favour. When according to this scheme, the Hindus of Kashmir were being coerced for conversion they approached Tegh Bahadur for assistance. The Guru advised them to go to the Emperor and tell him that if he first secured the conversion of their leader Guru Tegh Bahadur they would all embrace Islam *en masse*. Thereupon the Emperor summoned the Guru to court and pressed him for conversion. But when he persistently refused, the Emperor decided to kill him. On getting scent of his intentions, the Guru embraced death in the manner related above for the glory of his faith.

The other version is that Tegh Bahadur exacted *tithe* from the Sikhs and Hindus alike of the Punjab with great severity. His *masands* (agents) resorted to coercion in some cases. Then as the number of Sikh soldiers increased, they started loot and

plunder. Guru Tegh Bahadur is said to have acted in cooperation with a local Muslim saint. Both Hindus and Muslims of the Punjab started complaining against these acts to the imperial agents which lead to his arrest for the defiance of imperial authority. Ramray, his rival, was also poisoning the ears of the Emperor and his courtiers by presenting them with an exaggerated and distorted picture of his activities. Consequently, the Emperor felt that it was fraught with danger to overlook the activities of such a tax-raising, militaristic *Sachcha Padshah* and sentenced him to death which was the customary punishment for sedition, but promised to spare his life if he accepted Islam. The Guru did not think it worthwhile to purchase his life at the cost of his conscience. It would thus appear that the main causes of the death of the Guru were the following:—

(1) The gradual transformation of the spiritual primacy of the Guru from the days of Guru Arjun into temporal chieftaincy as a result of accretions of militarism and magnificence coupled with hereditary succession.

(2) The participation of Guru Arjun and Hararay in Mughal wars of succession and the consequent suspicion against them of political ambition.

(3) The enrolment of the Gurus as Mughal *mansabdars* and then withdrawal from service aroused suspicion of rebellious tendencies.

(4) The adoption of the title *Sachcha Padshah* by Guru Tegh Bahadur and use of force in realizing *tithes*.

(5) The claim of Prithwichand and Ramray for the office of the Guru on the grounds of primogeniture lent support to the view that it was a mere civil and political inheritance.

(6) The emergence of disgruntled elements due to disputed successions and their incitement of the Emperor and his agents lead them to intervene against the Gurus.

(7) Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution against the Hindus, leading to temple-destruction, forcible conversion and destruction of powerful Hindu leader like Jay Singh, the son of Jaswant Singh, and the leaders of the Jats, Satnamis, Bundelas and Marathas.

(8) Guru Tegh Bahadur's lack of faith in securing justice from the fanatical Aurangzeb and consequent decision to embrace death by the feint of showing a miracle.

After Tegh Bahadur's death, the Sikh discontent reached its climax and they felt they were being subjected to wanton persecution. Guru Arjun was the first to be martyred and thereafter the Emperors had been trying to sow seeds of dissension among the Sikhs by offering protection and support to rivals

Guru Govind Singh
(1670-1708)

against the Gurus. They looked upon Prithwichand and Ram-ray as imperial stooges and the conviction gradually gained ground among them that the Emperor wanted to destroy their sect or else there was no reason why he should interfere with the work of their *masands*, murder their Gurus and destroy their places of worship. A passion for vengeance swelled up and they determined to brave all risks to avenge the death of their Gurus. What was needed was an able leader to canalise this discontent into a systematic rebellion.

The leader was now soon discovered. After Guru Tegh Bahadur's death the dispute for succession arose once again, but the Sikhs refused to accept Ram-ray as their Guru and chose Govind Singh, the only son of Tegh Bahadur as the next Guru. The new Guru was still a minor and the Sikhs apprehending danger to his life kept him underground. For about twenty years, Guru Govind Singh secretly prepared for his final move. During this period, the Guru acquired knowledge of Persian and Sanskrit, and devoted himself to the worship of Durga and enforced a scheme of regenerating the Sikhs and to convert them into a martial brotherhood fired with a passion for service to religion. He promulgated a new code for the Sikhs and those who were found guilty of transgressing it were not only excluded from the intimate circle but were also punished. Some of the important regulations of the code were:

(1) Keeping on one's person the five 'K's' i.e. *Kesh* (uncut hair), *Kanghi* (comb); *Kachchha* (a short underwear); *Kripan* (sword) and *Kara* (iron bangle).

(2) To reject caste-distinctions and adopt inter-dining and inter-marriage.

(3) Implicit obedience to the instructions of the Guru even at the cost of disregarding Hindu-Muslim rituals, sacred books, and favourite deities and to be ready to sacrifice everything at the beck and call of the Guru.

(4) To add 'Singh' as a suffix to their names and to behave fearlessly like a Singh, that is a lion.

(5) To acquire military training and never come to terms with Muslims, the inveterate enemies of Sikhism.

(6) Complete social ostracism of Prithwichand, Ram-ray, the oppressive *Masands* and their descendants.

(7) To abstain from smoking and partaking on *jy* of *Jhatka* meat (i.e. meat obtained by killing an animal at one stroke).

It is usually improper for a religious organisation to be organised on military lines. It has therefore been remarked by a number of historians that the aims of Guru Govind Singh's relations with the Timurids the Guru had ceased to be spiritual and had become purely worldly so that their struggle was merely political in character. But this does not contain the whole truth. In the seventeenth century India, the policy

of religious toleration was being gradually given up so that many saints and reformers both in the north and the south had come to realise that when the armed might of the state was being used against their religion the best form of worship was militarisation and capture of political power. If religion could be defended by acquiring political authority, it was the duty of every pious man to pursue this objective with a passionate religious zeal. In order to appreciate this mentality properly, it must be viewed in its proper perspective, *viz.* in the background of the policy of Muslim rulers towards their Hindu subjects. That alone furnishes the key as to why the Sikhs and the Marathas led their raids against the Muslim monarchs, and why, Maratha saints like Ramdas or the Sikh Gurus laid so much emphasis on an iron discipline.

Guru Govind Singh fixed his headquarters at Anandpur, founded by Guru Tegh Bahadur and situated in the Kahlur state. He now started inciting the people of the hilly tracts of Kashmir and the Punjab to armed rebellion against the Emperor. Those who did not fall in line with him were dubbed as the enemies of religion and country and were subjected to plunder and loot. This coerced the population to act and added to his strength and power. But local officers were strong enough to deal with him effectively. Sometimes, the Sikhs scored successes even against the imperial troops but the local Hindu Rajas collaborated with the imperial agents so that Guru Govind Singh was hunted from place to place and had to suffer great hardships in course of his struggle and once even narrowly escaped falling into their hands. His mother and two sons Fatch Singh and Zorawar Singh were captured and killed while their aged grand-mother either committed suicide by poisoning or died from the shock of their deaths. A Muslim historian asserts that Guru Govind Singh finally addressed a letter of apology to Aurangzeb who instructed the local officers to harass him no more and permit him to proceed to the south to wait on him. Faruki accepts this view while Macauliffe sees no reason to doubt its veracity. But the grounds on which Irvine has expressed grave doubts about its authenticity appears more plausible.

Aurangzeb died in 1707. In the ensuing war of succession Guru Govind Singh took the side of Prince Muazzam and on his becoming the Emperor was enrolled as a Mughal *mansabdar* although it is difficult to ascertain what *mansab* he secured. He accompanied the new Emperor to the south where a Pathan killed him at Nander in 1708. The Guru was not survived by any sons but his adopted son named Ajit Singh succeeded to the personal property of the Guru. In his own life-time Govind Singh enjoyed such reverence and devotion that he could deal with the Sikhs like an autocratic despot. But he wanted to

convert the Sikhs into a permanent military fraternity. Hence he was more in favour of developing its organised strength than the leadership of any single man. That is why he had decided that there would be no Guru after him and did not nominate any successor. He stated that wherever there was an assembly of even five Sikhs the spirit of the Guru would be present to guide their deliberations so that any joint decision of the Sikhs would really be the decision of the Guru himself. He also established a representative democratic organisation of the Sikhs and entrusted it the task of directing and controlling them. In the absence of the Guru, it was this institution that preserved the integrity of the Sikhs but despite all this, the Sikhs lost that unity and cohesion which they possessed during his life-time and divided into numerous local units and engaged in loot and plunder under local leaders. Their highest ambition was confined to securing a local *jagir* for themselves. Their organisation thus became loose and weak, but their range of activity increased, so that in course of time it became possible to weld them together to form an independent Sikh State.

When Guru Govind Singh died, a new disciple named Banda Bahadur was also by his side. A message was sent to the Sikhs in the Punjab that although the present body of the Guru had come to an end he would reappear at the appropriate moment to direct the war of Sikh independence. The Sikhs were, therefore, warned and exhorted to look for that moment and keep themselves in readiness for it. The Sikhs, therefore, promptly started collecting money and munitions of war. In the meantime, Banda Bahadur made his appearance in the north. He declared that he was Guru Govind Singh himself and was coming to assume the leadership of the Sikhs. The news ran like wild fire and as his appearance bore a great affinity to that of the Guru, even his intimate associates were deceived. The number of his followers became legion. His first success was secured against the *faujdar* of Sonpat. Next he moved upon Sarhind and defeated the local *faujdar* Wazir Khan. Since Wazir Khan was responsible for the execution of the sons of Guru Govind Singh, he was subjected to tortures and his disfigured body was suspended from a tree as an example to others. After the occupation of Sarhind, the Sikhs wreaked a terrible vengeance against their past sufferings. All Muslim captives, irrespective of age or sex were butchered and sometimes subjected to terrible tortures. All mosques were destroyed, tombs emptied of their contents and the very trace of Islam destroyed root and branch. The booty consisted of cash and valuables worth over 2 crores of rupees. The victorious Sikhs now fanned out to occupy the whole of the Sarkar of Sarhind and they soon captured Sumana, Kaithal, Kuhram,

Ambala, Thaneshwar, Machchhiwara, Ludhiana and other important centres at each of which they established military outposts, under capable officers. The other attempts to capture Sultanpur in Jalandhar doab and Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh were, however, unsuccessful.

In the meantime, Bahadur Shah had returned to the north after defeating his brother Kam Bakhsh. With a view to suppress the rising of the Sikhs, he sent a powerful force against them. At the same time, he sent a general circular to all the Sikhs in Mughal service directing them either to resign their posts or to have their beards shaved as a proof of their abjuring Sikhism. (It is said that all military companies carried with them a band of barbers who gave a free shave to all bearded Hindus whether they liked it or not). From 1710 to 1715, the resources of the empire were employed against Banda. The imperial agents captured Sikh strongholds like Sarhind, Lohgarh and Sadhora. But fighting continued. After the death of Bahadur Shah his successors Jahandar and Farrukhsiyar continued the struggle till in 1715, after standing a siege for eight months at Gurdaspur, Banda himself surrendered with some 700 Sikhs warriors. They were all carried to the capital and executed. Banda was specially subjected to inhuman tortures, his three year old son was put into his arms and hacked to death and his liver was thrust into his mouth. He was then cut to pieces to die in a prolonged agony. Khafi Khan, a Muslim chronicler bears eloquent testimony to Sikh valour, steadfastness and devotion to their Guru and remarks that among the 700 victims there was none who wore a depressed face or who did not heighten the glory of his order by his exemplary conduct. It was these qualities of the Sikhs which had enabled Banda to withstand the organised might of the empire for so many years. In five years of fighting, the Sikhs lost almost every battle but they gained a great moral victory inasmuch as they earned a high reputation for their valour and courage. The victorious Mughal generals subjected the guilty and the innocents alike to great atrocities and took terrible reprisals for the misdeeds of the Sikhs. The result was that though the Sikhs suffered numerous military defeats they did not lose faith in their ultimate success in the future and the atrocities committed on them only served to inflame their passions for a retribution to come. Thus though the lands and forts held by them were seized by the enemy, their spirit remained unbroken and the sacrifices of their brethren who were martyred only served to produce a richer crop of new martyrs.

After the death of Banda, the Sikhs had to spend some years in peaceful development. But the fire for revenge remained unquenched. On the other side the Governors of the Punjab kept

Foundation of the
Khalsa

a stern eye over them. Among them Abd-ul-Samad and his son Zakariya Khan deserve special mention. Because of their vigilance and emergency powers, the Sikhs got no opportunity to recoup their strength or organisation. But in 1733, things began to change. Zakariya Khan tried to conciliate the Sikhs by securing for Kapur Singh the title of Nawab and a *Jagir*. But this proved no permanent solution of the problem. The Sikhs were itching for a revolt and were waiting only for a suitable opportunity. In the meantime, Kapur Singh won the confidence of the Sikhs and organised the Sikh warriors into *Buddha dal* i. e. 'Old veterans' and *Tarun dal* i. e. 'Youths'. The former led by Shyam Singh, Guru Bakhsh Singh, Guru Dayal Singh, Jassa Singh Kalal and others. The latter were divided into five units under the leaderships of (1) Dip Singh and Sudha Singh, (2) Karma Singh and Dharma Singh (3) Kanha Singh and Vinod Singh, (4) Dashwandh Singh and (5) Madan Singh and Vir Singh. This provided the new leaders an opportunity for training and experience. But even so the Sikhs did not secure any remarkable political success.

Taking advantage of foreign invasions in 1739, 1748 and 1750 the Sikhs secured some money and the number of their followers also increased. But on the other hand the governors of the Punjab took repressive measures and fixed a price of Rs. 10/- on the head of a Sikh and earmarked a force specially for their destruction. This for a time tended to weaken them. But as the pressure of foreign invasions increased, the governors became weaker and weaker, and general lawlessness increased giving the bold Sikh warriors a splendid opportunity to acquire power and influence. Jassa Singh Kalal now rechristened the military organisation of Kapur Singh as *Khalsa* and exhorted the Sikh to act in unison.

Thus in 1761 the *Khalsa* had replaced the Guru, and the leaders anxious to acquire political power in the Punjab had come out into the open. But this was not to be till much later under Ranjit Singh.

Further Readings

1. Cunningham—*History of the Sikhs*.
2. N. K. Sinha—*Rise of the Sikh Power*, Chapters I-III.
3. Faruki—*Aurangzeb and his Times*, Chapter X.
4. Irvine—*Later Mughals* (Ed. by Sarkar) Vol. I, pp. 73-121 ; 307-320.
5. Sarkar—*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. I, Chapters V and X.
6. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*, Chapter VI.

CHAPTER XVI

WARS OF SUCCESSION AND THE PUPPET EMPERORS

Political principles of the Muslims were never clearly defined at any particular time. On the contrary, they have evolved through the ages according to the needs of the hour. Muhammad combined in his person the dignity of the Pope with the majesty of the Caesar. The Muslims believe that he received directions from God at all times. Hence his saying and doings have acquired a divine significance. The system of government established by him served as an ideal for the Muslim world. But his successors received no divine revelations. On the contrary, they drew inspiration from the life and teachings of Muhammad. But even then the first four Caliphs did not or could not interpret the Prophets' actions and words in the same manner. The later Caliphs did not claim moral or spiritual primacy. Instead, they were satisfied merely with exacting the oath of fealty and obedience. When the Arabs started defining political principles, they used a language flexible enough to be interpreted differently according to circumstances. Consequently, political development under Muslim sovereigns did not flow from any pre-conceived principles. Instead, political practice was made the basis of generalisation by political thinkers. Thus, in Islam, practice has not followed principles, rather principles have been derived from past practice. This is the reason why in the Muslim world, reconciliation of practice with principles has not been like the slow movement of a river steadily progressing through an expansive plain but like the noisy movement of a powerful hill-stream with many turns and violent speed. This applies as much to the problem of succession as to anything else. The Muslims felt that their ruler should be a popularly elected head of a democratic government. But they accepted nomination by a single individual and acquiescence to usurpation as equivalent to election by the people. Hence the theoretical aspect of the problem of succession has always been vague and indefinite.

Consequently, different dynasties developed different distinctive practices. The Timurids also did the same. As Timurid practice noticed earlier, Timur had acquired *de facto* sovereignty while nominally acknowledging *de jure* authority of a Chaggezkhanid prince. It was therefore, but natural, that his practices should bear impress of Mongol

traditions as well. The Mongols elected the *Khakan* (Emperor) from among the members of the royal family. But the blood-relations—particularly brothers of the *Khakan* were given autonomous authority over provinces on a hereditary basis and wore the title of Khan. In this arrangement no special sanctity was attached to primogeniture. But the convention of dividing the possessions of the last ruler among all his sons had hardened into a definite tradition. Timur made a slight change in this practice. He laid emphasis on the special position of the eldest son. He wanted that the central part of the empire including the capital should go to the eldest son, while the rest of the empire should be divided among others who should recognize the paramountcy of their elder brother and thus preserve the unity of the empire. The history of the Timurids brings out in bold relief adherence to this two-headed principle *viz.* (1) Special position of the eldest son and (2) division of the empire among the rest of them.

This equally applied to the Timurid rulers of India as well. Babar had succeeded to the throne of Farghana on grounds of primogeniture but he had also to provide for Jahangir Mirza and Nasir Mirza. Not only that, it was in apparent vindication of the hereditary right of these brothers that the self-seeking nobles of Farghana had obliged Babar to give up his paternal state. On occupation of Kabul, Babar once more provided for his brothers although he had to face numerous intrigues on account of their machinations. In spite of all this, he directed Humayun to have due regard for the rights of his brothers and never to lose sight of the fact that where he got 6 parts, Kamran had received 5. Hence although Humayun became the Emperor of Timurid possessions in India, he had to assign large provinces to his brothers. As we have noticed in chapter II, Humayun had to undergo great hardships because of the treasons of his brothers. But he too offered Kabul to Hakim while Akbar was declared the heir to the throne. We have narrated in chapter VIII what Akbar suffered on account of Hakim's disloyalty. His conduct sometimes greatly exasperated the Emperor but he abstained from deposing him only to honour the memory of his father.

From the days of Akbar, a new development began. The practice so far had been that on the death of a ruler his sons contended for supremacy, and mutual jealousy and animosity was the rule. But the sons of the regnant sovereign had never taken up arms against their own father in his very lifetime. One principal reason probably for this was that the sons of Babar and Humayun had not become sufficiently advanced in years to get impatient to secure political authority. The position of Akbar was different. All his sons born up to the age of 27 had died in infancy. This made him anxious

Causes of the Revolt of
Salim

about the heir to the throne. Fervent prayers were addressed to God, blessings of saints dead and alive were evoked and all sorts of vows were taken to propitiate God. It was perhaps in answer to these prayers and vows that Prince Salim was born in 1569 under the spiritual protection of Shaikh Salim. Akbar expressed his gratitude to the Shaikh by lavishing favours on him, performed the vow of making a pilgrimage on foot to the tomb of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti and ordered grand festivities at the court and in the palace. Akbar had great fondness for Salim and as the latter himself remarks in his autobiography never called him Salim or Sultan Salim but Shaikhu Baba. Salim became the darling of all but too much fondling made him a spoilt child. Unlike other royal princes he acquired experience neither of government nor of war and in the congenial atmosphere of court spent most of his time in joy and revelry. He became unduly fond of drink and developed other allied vices.

Akbar looked upon him as the heir to throne and in order to equip him for the onerous duties of the Emperor wished to train him in various branches of the government. But Salim did not like this. That is why we do not find the name of Salim associated with any important military campaign of the reign of Akbar. The Emperor began to feel disconcerted by his habits of indolence and dissipation. Salim's thoughts, on the other hand, were moving in a different direction. He had already become the father of a number of children. His harem included 20 principal wives and a host of concubines. He had passed the prime of his life and signs of age would soon make its appearance. But his father refused to make room for him. He was still quite fit and healthy and desired to rule for many more years in peace and glory by throwing all the care and burden of government on his son. When Salim did not come up to his expectations, he gave more and more encouragement to Murad and Daniyal. This aroused the apprehensions of Salim that the Emperor might ultimately nominate one of them as the heir to the throne. He was particularly jealous of Murad. This inner discontent continued to grow and finally burst out in an open revolt.

But the fears of Salim were utterly groundless. It is true that some of the closest associates of the Emperor like Abdul Fazal, Man Singh and Aziz Koka cast aspersions on the Prince's conduct and even made fun of him. But the Emperor gave no indication of depriving the prince of the right of succession. On the contrary, the Emperor had consistently shown such preferential treatment to him as might leave no doubt in the minds of the Prince and the people in the court and the country that he was earmarked for succession to the throne. In 1577, he was

given the *mansab* of 10,000 while Murad and Daniyal got *mansabs* of 7,000 and 6,000 only. Eight years later when Salim was raised to the *mansab* of 12,000 his younger brothers were kept at 9,000 and 7,000 only. When differences between Salim and Adul Fazal began to grow and the Prince complained against the latter, the Emperor for a time punished that able and loyal counsellor. In 1599, when he was going to the south, he entrusted the Government of northern India to Salim and instructed him to lead an expedition against Mewar in conjunction with Man Singh. Senior ladies of the royal household who exercised great influence on the Emperor were also solidly in his favour.

But even then Salim could not feel reassured. His companions also were not of the desirable sort. These evil-minded persons advised him to declare his independence and seize the throne. Salim tried to seize Agra and failing in the attempt moved away to Prayag or Allahabad and assuming the style of 'Shah' conferred *jagirs* and titles on his followers and appointed his flattering minions as governors of Kalpi, Bihar and Jaunpur. It appears that Salim had no intention of displacing his father but was anxious to acquire an independent status for himself in a part of the empire where he could live as he pleased and collect a personal following which might ensure his elevation to the throne. That is why he neither called himself the Padshah, nor did he remove the name of his father from the *sikka* and the *khutba*. His position was, that as his father was the Shahanshah he must have some Shahs under him. It was only to meet this requirement that he had assumed the style of Shah. He probably did not have full faith in himself. That is the reason why when Hamida Banu Begam sent him word that she was coming to meet him, he slunk away to Prayag without daring to meet her.

Even then, what he had done was enough to disturb the peace of the Emperor and the empire. The Emperor learnt of the revolt while he was in Khandesh. He tried to bring him on the path of duty by persuasion but to no purpose. After the occupation of Asirgarh in 1601, the Emperor returned to Agra. He soon got the news that Salim was coming at the head of 30,000 troops ostensibly to pay his respects to his father. Akbar was highly displeased with the recent conduct of Salim. But the death of Murad, unworthiness of Daniyal, minority of Khusrav and his fondness for Salim prevented him from declaring him a rebel and taking any harsh measures against him. He therefore sent him word that he should either send back his troops and come to him alone or he should immediately retreat to Prayag. Salim accepted the second alternative and returned to Prayag.

Beginning of the
revolt (1599)

Salim forgiven
(1603)

The Emperor now appointed him as the governor of Bengal and Orissa as a corrective for his past lapses. But Salim neither went there himself nor sent any of his followers as his deputy. This greatly offended the Emperor. He now summoned Abul Fazal from the Deccan in order to devise some effective method of bringing round Salim. Salim feared that Abul Fazal might harden the attitude of the Emperor. He therefore purchased the services of Vir Singh Bundela to prevent Abul Fazal's journey to the north. Vir Singh attacked Abul Fazal and tried to keep him in honourable detention. But he would not agree to this. He had, therefore, no alternative but to kill him. This happened in 1602. The death of Abul Fazal was largely the result of his own arrogance. He was informed betimes of the danger on his way but he refused to deflect from the path of duty to the Emperor because of fear of highway robbers. When he was advised to take security measures, he haughtily rejected them and when Vir Singh requested him to agree to live in honourable confinement for the time being, he turned down the request and hurled abuses on him. Death seems to have dogged his steps and evil fate deprived him of his native good sense.

When the Emperor learnt of his death, he was overwhelmed with grief. He raved in great agony that if the Prince wanted the throne he could have killed him rather than indulged in this senseless murder. When he had recovered from the shock, he sent an army to capture Vir Singh and ravage his land. His attitude towards Salim began to stiffen. He was now advised by Salim's critics to deprive him of succession. But to this the Emperor could not agree. He was not an inanimate machine that he could mechanically determine his duty by letting law and justice have its blind course. His duty as the Emperor and the sovereign was constantly tempered by his deep affection for the darling of his prayers. He therefore permitted Salima Begam to proceed to Prayag to bring round the Prince. Salim came to the capital and through the mediation of Hamida Banu and Salima Begam a reconciliation was at last effected. Akbar forgave him and in order to wean him away from evil company decided to send him on the Mewar campaign. But Salim continued putting forward excuses, so that the Emperor in disgust permitted him to return to Prayag.

Taking advantage of Salim's indiscretions and Akbar's dissatisfaction against him, some nobles at the court conspired to secure the succession for Khusrau. Khusrau was the eldest son of Salim and was born of his first wife Manbai in 1589. Salim was greatly attached to Manbai on account of her personal charms, native intelligence and devotion to him. When she became the mother of the eldest son of the Prince, her prestige rose still

Conspiracy against Salim

higher. Her father Bhagwan Das and brother Man Singh ranked among the highest grandees of the state. But the happy couple had no premonition of the sufferings this child was to bring them. Manbai did not like that Khusrau should oppose his own father but he paid no heed to her remonstrances. When Manbai could hear it no longer, she poisoned herself to death in 1605. Her death proved a great torment to Salim who for four days refused to touch any food or drink. But even his mother's sacrifice had no effect upon Khusrau. Ambition had warped his judgment and blinded his vision. He was no doubt an intrepid young man of spotless character and generous. He was the nephew of Man Singh and the son-in-law of Aziz Koka, both holding the highest *mansab* of 7,000 and at the top of the Mughal peerage. But Akbar could not accept a proposal for disinheriting Salim even from such quarters. He however, desired to bring Salim to the capital and induce him to pursue a line of action which might facilitate his peaceful succession. Just then Hamida Banu died and Salim came to offer condolences and apologised to his father for his past misconduct and promised to abide by his instructions in the future. Shortly after this Akbar fell ill, and it was feared, mortally. Aziz Koka sought to arrest Salim but did not succeed in the attempt. He now convened a meeting of leading men in the capital and placed before them the proposal of superseding Salim in favour of his own son Khusrau. Man Singh and his friends also supported the move. But Sayyad Khan opposed it and the meeting dispersed without coming to any definite conclusion. Sayyad Khan and his supporters went to Salim at the head of their retainers to apprise him of the situation. The hostile nobles also gradually came round and in order to safeguard their future went to Salim and expressed their adherence to him. He promised to grant them all a free pardon and when he found his position to be absolutely safe, he went to wait upon his ailing father. The Emperor beckoned to him to don his official robes and gird his sword and having thus signified his choice of him as the successor, he closed his eyes for ever and Salim was proclaimed Emperor as Jahangir.

Salim thus initiated the move of attempting to mount the throne even in the lifetime of his father. His example proved infectious and the tendency assumed alarming proportions with lapse of time. His debaucheries and dissipations, neglect of duty and love of ease had lowered his prestige so much that if Akbar had shown any hesitation he would have been passed over and his son Khusrau would have mounted the throne.

Jahangir as a prince had no doubt ruled at Allahabad without any let or hindrance but he had never been guilty of

leading his forces against his own father. He says in his autobiography that it was for this reason that all his affairs finally turned out to be well. But Khusrau was to cause his father far deeper anguish. Man Singh had desired to carry him with himself to Bengal. But Jahangir did not consider it proper because it might lead to the loss of the eastern provinces where Man Singh might set up Khusrau as Emperor. He therefore assured Man Singh that no action will be taken against Khusrau for his past conduct. He then permitted Man Singh to proceed to Bengal. The departure of Man Singh left Khusrau without any powerful supporter at court.

Jahangir apparently treated Khusrau with all affection and care and assigned to him a separate place for his residence. He was given an honoured place in the court. But

Causes of rebellion in order to prevent him from going wrong in the future he had given secret instructions for surveillance on his movements and he was not allowed to mix with people of doubtful loyalty. He was a free man but he was generally not allowed to leave the fort. The Emperor might have gradually allowed him greater privileges but Khusrau was mortified both by the Emperor's kindness and vigilance and a constant fear preyed on his mind that he might have to spend the rest of his life as a virtual prisoner. Khusrau was a little vain, stubborn and weak-minded. Hence he could not always take a correct decision. He was still in his teens. Most people liked him for his personal charms and unblemished character. If he could keep his father satisfied, he could easily secure a high *mansab* in his life-time and succession to the throne after he was dead. His mother had advised him to follow this line of action. But he had rejected that wholesome advice and had desired to capture the throne to the exclusion of his father. Even his mother's death by suicide did not abate his heedless ambition. Evil-minded people imposed themselves on him and he foolishly regarded them as his well-wishers to the utter neglect of what his parents expected of him. He found it intolerable that he who had aspired for the throne should be obliged to live like a prisoner. Must he live the wretched life of a flattering minion of the same unworthy father whose vices he had himself broadcast and the story of whose lapses was known to all and sundry? On such ravings of baulked ambition was grafted the evil advice of his lowly companions and the result was an open revolt.

In 1606, he left the fort ostensibly to pay a visit to Sikamdara and suddenly fled towards the Punjab. Husain Beg and Abdur Rahim joined him on the way and an attempt was made to raise an army and seize Lahore. The siege was still going on when the report of the arrival of a pursuit party reached

Revolt of Khusrau
(1606)

the rebel camp. On hearing of his flight, Jahangir had sent couriers on all sides and had received definite information that he had gone to the Punjab and not Bengal. The Emperor sent a force in advance and himself followed at the head of another army, and was informed of the presence of the Prince at Lahore. The Emperor was still in a forgiving mood. Hence without waiting for an apology from Khusrau he himself took the initiative in bringing him round. But Khusrau was adamant and forced a war in which he suffered a defeat and fled towards Kabul. But the Emperor had already sent instructions to guard all ferries and roads. He was therefore captured and brought as a prisoner to Lahore. The Prince was thrown into prison while his companions were suitably punished. The Emperor still entertained hopes of effecting a reconciliation with Khusrau.

But fate had decreed otherwise. That is why his generosity was uniformly ill-requited. When Jahangir went to Khusrau blinded (1607) Kabul on hearing of the Persian attack on Qandahar, he carried Khusrau with him and relaxed some of the restrictions on him. But a plot was formed to murder the Emperor while he was hunting, which leaked out and the Emperor had all the chief conspirators executed. On the insistence by nobles, Khusrau was blinded.

On his return to the capital, he once more relented and had his eyes treated so that partial light was restored. But Khusrau's attitude showed no sign of improvement. He would ever rue his fate and looked upon his father's kindnesses as a means of humiliating him. All efforts to revive his spirits proved a failure. He never sincerely forsook ambition or sought a reconciliation with his father. Jahangir later married Nurjahan who is it said offered the hand of her daughter in marriage to Khusrau because of the Emperor's deep affection for him. This would have ensured his succession to the throne. But he foolishly declined the offer and thus antagonised Nurjahan. One group at the court was constantly in favour of Khusrau and hoped that just as despite Salim's revolt Akbar had nominated him as his successor, similarly Jahangir also would finally offer the crown to his first-born. But the enemies of Khusrau were very powerful. Khurram had secured the title of Shahjahan and a *mansab* of 30,000 as a result of his successes in Mewar and Deccan. He had also been provided the special privilege of sitting on a *Chauki* close to the imperial throne. He was anxious to brush aside all rivals to ensure his elevation to the throne. His father-in-law Asaf Khan had secured custody of Khusrau and this not only precluded the possibility of his escape

from prison but might have even entailed his murder. Nurjahan was eager to remain at the helm of affairs and as the supporters of Khusrau opposed her domination, she became hostile to Khusrau as well. But the greatest enemy of Khusrau was Khusrau himself. He failed to show any change in his behaviour which could earn for him greater freedom and opportunities for securing administrative and military assignments. He continued to rot in prison. Finally, in 1620 Shahjahan took him along with him to the Deccan and had him murdered. This put an end to the melancholy career of this luckless prince. He was buried in Allahabad and the site is known to this day as Khusrau Bagh.

Although Jahangir's *Harem* included hundreds of wives and concubines, the number of his children was far less while those who figured in relation to succession Parvez (1589-1626) were only four, Khusrau, Parvez, Khurram and Shahryar. The career of Khusrau has already been detailed. Next to him in age was Parvez who was born in 1589 of Sahab-i-jamal (*i. e.* the Mistress of Beauty). At the age of 17, he was sent to invade Mewar and about three years later he was sent to Deccan where he acted as the Viceroy and the commander-in-chief for six years. But he exhibited no conspicuous ability in any of these regions. He was vain and proud, loved pomp and show and looked upon excessive fondness for wine and women as a hall-mark of greatness. He, therefore, commanded little respect and nobody thought that he could be considered eligible for the throne. But upto 1615, he enjoyed the highest esteem among his brothers. He held charge of the Deccan and his *mansab* stood at 15,000 *Zat*, 8,000 *Sawar*. But Khurram's success in Mewar made him level with his elder brother while in 1617 he far outstripped him when his *mansab* rose to 30,000 *Zat*, 20,000 *Sawar*. In 1619, Parvez secured a promotion but even then he got nothing better than 20,000 *Zat*, 10,000 *Sawar*. But the death of Khusrau and rebellion of Shahjahan in 1622 made him heir to the throne and his *mansab* shot up to 40,000 *Zat*, 30,000 *Sawar*. He secured the co-operation of such senior and able general as Mahabat Khan. But even in these circumstances his lethargy and dissipations continued as ever. Consequently, he predeceased his father in 1626.

Khurram, the third son of Jahangir was a man of a very different character. He was born at Lahore in 1592 of Jagat Gosain, the daughter of Raja Uday Singh Rathor of Jodhpur. The new-born babe's name was chosen by Akbar who assigned the care of his upbringing to his childless wife Ruqaiya Begam. The Begum nursed him to boyhood with great affection and care. Upto the death of Akbar, he was under her loving custody. Akbar had twice assigned to

Khurram (1592-1666)

Khurram important errands. When in 1604 the Emperor was going towards Prayag to bring round Salim by force if necessary he learned of the illness of Hamida Banu, and sent Khurram to ascertain whether the report was really correct. In 1605 when during a fight between the elephants of Khusrau and Salim a brawl started between the father and the son and Khusrau complained to the Emperor against his father, Akbar sent Khurram to inform Salim that he should maintain peace. When a conspiracy to set aside Salim was afoot, he called Khurram to his side but the latter who was in attendance on his grandfather did not leave his bedside.

Thus at the time of Jahangir's accession this thirteen year old Prince was by no means negligible in the eyes of the court or the royal household. He had received an excellent education and could read and write Persian with perfect ease and facility. Because of his keen intelligence, strong memory and native genius he made a rapid progress in his studies but he took greater interest in physical exercises, heroic exploits and acquiring skill in the use of arms.

At the time of Khusrau's revolt, he was appointed the head of the regency council at the capital. Since then this ambitious proud Prince with a native fondness for pomp and magnificence began to conjure up the dreams of acquiring imperial majesty by outstripping both of his elder brothers. In comparison to Parvez, Jahangir showed greater regard to Khurram because of his superior talents and greater valour. This added to his vanity and superiority complex. The dissolute character of Parvez and rebellion by Khusrau improved his prospects still further.

Other factors also contributed to his glory. In 1607, Jahangir agreed to the proposal of marrying him to Arjumand Banu, the daughter of Asaf Khan which ensured for him the support of that crafty minister and his party. The same year, he got the *jagir* of Hisar Firuza and the *mansab* of 8,000 *Zat*, 5,000 *Sawar* and he was allowed the extraordinary privilege of affixing his seal on all *farmans* and *parwanas*. In 1610, his *mansab* rose to 10,000 *Zat*, 5,000 *Sawar*. In 1612, he was married to Arjumand Banu and he steadily rose in the affections of his father.

In 1611, happened an event which changed the very course of Jahangir's life and exercised a tremendous influence on the subsequent history of the empire. This was his marriage with Nur Mahal. She had been born in the reign of Akbar and originally bore the name of Mihrunnissa. Her father Ghiyas Beg secured an employment at the capital and later rose to be the *wazir* of the empire and secured the title of Etmad-ud-daula. Asaf Khan, the father-in-law of Khurram was one of his sons. Mihrun-

Nurjahan

nissa was a peerless beauty and under the care of her parents grew up to be a young lady of exceptional merits and great urbanity. She was married to Sher Afkun who secured a faujdarship in Bengal and was killed in 1607 in an altercation with the local governor. His widowed wife Nur Mahal and their daughter Ladli Begam had since then stayed within the royal household. In 1611, the Emperor fell frantically in love with Nur Mahal and married her. She soon rose to be the chief consort and got the title of Nurjahan. Nurjahan took all possible precautions to preserve on the one hand the health of Jahangir and on the other to prevent any nobleman from acquiring undue influence because of his failing health. She gradually gathered the reins of government in her own hands and organised a powerful group of her followers. In course of time, she acquired practically all power of sovereignty and her name also appeared on the *sikka*. Only she had no place in the *khutba*.

Nurjahan included the promising young prince Khurram, the son-in-law of her brother and the favourite of the Emperor in her group. His success in Mewar (1614) and the Deccan (1617) was largely due to her all-out support and it was with her approval that he was given the *mansab* of 30,000 *Zat*, 20,000 *sawar*. It was also just then that he was given the title of Shahjahan which greatly enhanced his prestige in the empire.

In order to cement this relationship of amity and goodwill she proposed to marry her daughter Ladli Begam to Shahjahan. But he spurned the proposal so that Nurjahan was driven in 1621 to marry her to Shahryar who was at the same time promoted to the *mansab* of 8,000 *Zat*, 4,000 *Sawar*. This sowed the seed of estrangement between Nurjahan and Shahjahan. Shahjahan began to grow jealous of the overweening influence of the Empress and desired that he should acquire control over the affairs of government in the very life-time of his father when his health was so rapidly declining. But Nurjahan was unwilling to part with power and became a little suspicious of Shahjahan's intentions. The death of her parents and estrangement with Shahjahan obliged her to look for other supporters and she sought to bring Shahryar into increasing prominence. On the other hand, Shahjahan suspected the malicious influence of the Empress in everything that the Emperor decreed. Consequently, mutual suspicions and jealousy tended to increase between them.

On his second victory against Malik Amber, he got no special rewards and even his request for the *jagir* of Dholpur was turned down. When he asked for certain facilities for the success of the Qandahar campaign, his appointment was cancelled in favour of Shahryar and he was ordered to send his contingent for service of the Emperor. When he tried to regain the affection and confidence of the Emperor, he was appointed

the Viceroy of Gujerat, Malwa, Khandesh and the Deccan and was ordered to stay on there.

The health of the Emperor was constantly declining and he could pass away any time. At such a moment, absence from the north could jeopardise his chances of succession because Nurjahan was fast building up a party of her own supporters and she could use her influence to place her son-in-law on the throne. Hence, instead of staying away in the Deccan, consolidating his power for the impending war of succession, he decided to seize the capital in the life-time of his father. This led to the outbreak of his rebellion.

This came as another great shock to Jahangir and the ailing Emperor had no peace for the rest of his life. Shahjahan's rebellion ensured the loss of Qandahar and, as Jahangir remarks in his Memoirs, he had to fight against those whom he had hoped to employ against the Uzbeks and the Persians. It also caused a great upheaval in other parts of the empire. Malik Amber started a victorious counter-offensive once again. Gujcrat, Malwa, Khandesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gondwana and Orissa were also affected. But he was finally defeated by Parvez and Mahabat Khan and was obliged to come to his knees. He had to give up Asirgarh and Rohtasgarh and had to send Dara and Aurangzeb as hostages to the Emperor.

Shahjahan's rebellion once more brought Parvez into the lime-light but he died in 1626. Just then Mahabat Khan was forced into rebellion and formed a junction with Shahjahan. When Jahangir breathed his last, Nurjahan and Asaf Khan were by his side while Shahryar was away. In order to counteract the influence of Nurjahan, Asaf Khan raised

Death of Jahangir and Shahjahan's accession to the throne

Dawar Bakhsh, the son of Khusrau to the throne, kept a strict vigil over the movements of Nurjahan and sent an urgent summons to Shahjahan to proceed immediately to the north. Shahryar proclaimed himself the Emperor at Lahore as soon as he got the news of his father's demise. But Asaf Khan declared him to be a rebel against the formal Emperor Dawar Bakhsh and sent a force against him which defeated him and put him under arrest.

In the meantime, Shahjahan had reached Gujerat. From there he sent instruction for the murder of Shahryar, Dawar Bakhsh and his younger brother and the two sons of Daniyal. Asaf Khan promptly complied and Shahjahan was formally crowned in 1628 as the Emperor. He fixed a pension for Nurjahan and she spent the rest of her days in the company of her widowed daughter in quiet devotion to God.

Shahjahan's murders established a new precedent. Henceforward, in a contest for the throne those who failed to capture the

crown invariably got the halter. Consequently, wars of succession proved far more ruinous than before.

Because of Salim's revolt, the conquest of Mewar and the Deccan had been delayed but it did not involve the loss of any part of the empire. Khusrau's rebellion caused a permanent division among the nobles, interrupted the conquest of Mewar, encouraged the Shah of Persia to invade Qandahar and made traitors of many nobles at the court. The ambition of Shahjahan led to the loss of Qandahar, provided an opportunity to Malik Ambar to regain his lost territory, engulfed a large part of the empire into a serious upheaval, took a toll of thousands of lives and the extermination of all possible rivals including Khusrau.

When Shahjahan grew old, he too had to witness the painful drama of a war among his sons. Not only that, he had to spend the remaining 8 years of his life as a prisoner and as a helpless spectator of the murders of his sons and grandsons.

Dara Shikoh
(1615-1659)

Shahjahan had four sons—Dara, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad, of whom Dara was the eldest. He was born in 1615 and got his first *mansab* (12,000 *Zat*, 6,000 *Sawar*) in 1633. Shahjahan was an affectionate father and loved all his children. His dearly loved wife had also urged him on her death-bed that he should pay due regard to them. But Shahjahan was fondest of Dara and honestly believed that Dara's succession to the throne after him would redound to the credit of the dynasty and the welfare of the empire. He therefore deliberately adopted a policy which should leave no doubt in the mind of anybody that Dara was destined to be the next sovereign. He thought this would put an end to all unhealthy rivalry and avoid needless bloodshed. He, therefore, assigned to Dara the *Jagir* of Hisar Firuza which was looked upon as the appanage of the heir-apparent and his *mansab* made a steep rise. In 1638, it was raised to 20,000 *Zat*, 10,000 *Sawar* while in 1648 he was promoted to 30,000. In 1656, it rose to 40,000 while in 1657 it was raised to 60,000 *Zat*, 40,000 *Sawar*, 30,000 *seh-aspa* and *do-aspa*.

He was also appointed the governor of important provinces like Allahabad (1645), the Punjab (1647) Gujerat (1649), and Multan and Kabul (1652), but the Emperor generally kept him by his side while his duties as governor were carried out by deputies. In 1655, he conferred on him the title of Shah Buland Iqbal, offered him a sash worth $4\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs that he himself had been using and fixed it himself to his turban, provided him with a gold throne in the durbar next to his own and publicly announced his decision to take no important step in the empire without his previous concurrence.

Thus the status, dignity and wealth of Dara went on increasing. But it did not prove to be an unmixed blessing.

Dara was liberal and tolerant by nature. He had been initiated by Mulla Shah Badakhshi a Sufi saint of repute and had established friendly contacts with the saints and learned pandits of Benares and other places. He was the author of *Sirrul Asrar*, containing translations of 50 Upanishads into Persian and was a firm believer in his great-grand father's doctrine of *Sulh-i-kul* (peace with all). He wanted to be in the good books of the Hindus and in pursuance of this object had married his son Sulaiman Shikoh to the sister's daughter of Mirza Raja Jay Singh, had secured a pardon for Maharana Raj Singh in 1654 and had interceded on behalf of Raja Prithwichand of Srinagar. Nor did he make any secret of his sympathies. His opponents, therefore, described him as a *Kafir* and a *Mulhid*. In his generosity, he took up the cause not only of the poor and the destitute but even of all dissembling rascals and base flatterers and regardless of their crimes used all his influence only to secure a pardon for them. This too brought him into great ill-repute and led to his differences with Sadullah Khan who regarded canvassing in favour of the wicked as improper and injurious to the empire. Once even Shahjahan had been constrained to remark that the Prince was friendly to the wicked and hostile to the good. He was, therefore, regarded as weak and sentimental. Dara had no high office at the centre but as the favourite of the Emperor he expected of central ministers and high officers the same respect as was due to the Emperor. Sadullah Khan would not permit this. This led to the emergence of two parties at the court—(1) the followers and flatterers of Dara and (2) the followers of the *wazir*.

Because of his constant presence at the capital, Dara became indolent and ease-loving and had no experience of war or civil government. The only campaign that he led was directed against Qandahar in 1653. At that time, he had a toy fort built at Lahore and destroyed it at the auspicious moment as an augury for success against Qandahar and tried to raise the morale of his troops by relating to them his dreams and visions of victory. He made himself a laughing-stock of the world by depending for his victory on the spells of wizards and magicians. Basking under the sunshine of royal favour, he lacked the opportunity to exercise tact and intelligence in winning friends and disarming opposition. That is why he could not pull on well with Sadullah Khan or Mir Jumla.

Next to Dara was Shuja, born in 1616 and who was a special favourite of Jahangir just as Shahjahan had been of Akbar. Shuja was a man of mild disposition, keen intelligence and urbane and charming manners. He was inclined towards Shiaism but he was no fanatic and hated the idea of religious persecution. He was an able general, a valiant fight-

er and a zealous commander. But he had greater fascination for sensual pleasures and lighter aspects of life. This gradually made him indolent and voluptuous and he began to neglect his normal duties. That is why he did not attain to greatness during the reign of his father.

Despite all this, Shahjahan gave him ample opportunities for progress and exhibition of his talents. In 1633, he sent him to the Deccan for the first time and gave him a *mansab* of 10,000. In 1638, his *mansab* was raised to 12,000 *Zat*, 8000 *Sawar* and he was sent to Kabul. Two years later, he was appointed governor of Bengal and Orissa and continued to hold the same office even till 1657.

The third son of the Emperor was Aurangzeb, born in 1618. He was a man of a serious disposition with great powers of dissimulation. He was packed with courage, valour, patience and self-confidence. He was not only a staunch believer in the doctrines of his faith but he regarded all other doctrines as false or misguided and considered it his solemn duty to suppress them. When a mere lad of 15, a powerful elephant disengaged from fight and rushed on the Prince but the latter boldly stood his ground and drove him back by a thrust of his spear. When the animal approached again and felled his horse, he quickly sprang to his feet and attacked it with his sword. In the meantime, other people rushed to his aid and he was saved.

The Emperor highly applauded his conduct and in 1635 sent him as the chief commander against Jujhar Singh. Just then, he also gave him the *mansab* of 15,000 *Zat*, 5000 *Sawar*. When the rebellion had been suppressed, the Emperor sent him in 1636 as the Viceroy of the Deccan where he stayed till 1644. His letters bear testimony to the fact that during his regime he did his best to settle the newly conquered territory, promote agriculture and improve the revenues of the state.

Aurangzeb soon acquired the same position in the reign of his father as the latter had enjoyed in that of his own father Jahangir. He was looked upon as the ablest general in the empire and he was sent against the Persians and the Uzbeks. As noticed earlier, he got no success in any of these spheres but his failure was far less dishonourable than that of other generals sent there. Even then, the Emperor was dissatisfied with him and sent him away to the Deccan, subjecting him to very harsh and unfair treatment. It has already been related in a foregoing chapter how he had used this opportunity to build up his power.

He was the ablest among the sons of Shahjahan. His personal character was admirable and simplicity, ideal. He was head and shoulders above all his brothers in respect of self-control, gravity of temper, native genius, leadership, diplomacy, exper-

ience of war and peace and tactful handling of men and situations. But he was not altogether free from defects. He was prone to take offence and never sincerely forgave anybody who had done him any serious harm. His orthodoxy degenerated into fanatical intolerance of others. He distrusted everybody and was unscrupulous in the use of means he considered necessary for the realization of his aims. He thought that Shahjahan and Dara neglected the interests of Islam and were unfit to govern the state according to Islamic ideals. In the beginning he bore no ill-will against his father, but in course of time it became a settled belief with him that his father saw everything through the jealous eyes of Dara and, therefore, did not do justice by him. He regarded the elevation of Dara to the throne as injurious to Islam and did his best to incite the Muslims against him by wilfully distorting his religious views. He thought that he should prevent succession of Dara not only to satisfy his personal ambition but also to fulfil his obligations as an orthodox Musalman. To gain his ends he could employ even the harshest and the most unjust methods. But none of his brothers possessed that grit and capacity for organisation and initiative which was native with him. All opponents of Dara regarded him as the most suited for the throne.

The youngest son of Shahjahan was Murad who was born in 1624. In the Balkh-Badakhshan campaign, he covered himself with glory in the initial stages but incurred Murad (1624-1661) red his father's displeasure when he came away from there without waiting for his permission. He was therefore excluded from court. A little later, he was appointed governor of Gujerat and retained that office till the outbreak of the war of succession in 1657.

Murad did not lack personal bravery or courage but he was wanting in a requisite sense of discipline and sobriety. In matters religious, he was utterly indifferent and liked neither the puritanism of Aurangzeb nor undue liberalism of Dara. But his ambition was next to none and he was unable to conceal his desire to acquire an independent status.

The war of succession initiated by these sons was unique even in the history of the Timurids. There were many causes that led to the war. All the four princes

Causes of the war of succession were ambitious and in view of their position, family tradition and Islamic practice, they justified their ambition as meet and proper. This was at the root of the conflict. Secondly, undue importance of Dara made all his brothers jealous of him and banded them together to prevent his accession. Thirdly, Dara underestimated the power of Aurangzeb and antagonised him by pouring scorn over his religious views. He took special delight in getting his proposals

rejected and placing before the Emperor an exaggerated account of his mistakes and lapses. This made Aurangzeb staunchly hostile to him and he secretly organised a powerful group against him. On his way to the Deccan from Qandahar, he had come to an understanding with Shuja and in order to cement this alliance he proposed a marriage between Shuja's daughter and his eldest son. The Emperor tried to disrupt the proposal but Aurangzeb stuck to his resolve. Similarly, he drew Murad also into this alliance and developed a code for secret correspondence. Murad had his own suspicions against Aurangzeb and therefore asked him point-blank what would be his share in the event of victory. Swearing by God and the Prophet, Aurangzeb gave him a solemn assurance in writing that he would have full sovereignty over Sindh, Kashmir, and Afghanistan and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the imperial treasure. Thus he assumed the leadership of anti-Dara group. Fourthly, there were factions even among the nobles. Many people regarded Dara as an ideal monarch for India and were prepared to do everything to ensure his accession of the throne. Others were determined to oppose him in defence of Islamic orthodoxy and entertained grave fears of undue increase in the influence of the Hindus in case he became the monarch. Fifthly, Shahjahan himself favoured the division of the Empire with the title of Emperor for Dara. He had, therefore, given his sons such a long rope that they could easily prepare for the contest. Lastly, the illness of Shahjahan coupled with the suspicion that the Emperor was probably dead and as Dara was virtually at the helm of affairs, they could not hope to secure authentic news from the capital they expected that Dara would make the announcement only after consolidating his power. Even when information was secured that the Emperor was alive and that he did not want that his sons should engage in a fratricidal war, nobody was willing to pay any heed to him because his younger sons regarded him as the mouthpiece of Dara and had lost all respect for him because of his undue favour for Dara. They attached no weight to Shahjahan's words of affection because they had not forgotten that he had raised the *mansab* of Dara above the total of the *mansabs* of all the other three sons combined and the *mansab* of Sipihr Shikoh, a minor son of Dara stood higher than that of even the eldest sons of Shuja and Aurangzeb. They felt that all his actions were intended to ensure the succession of Dara and if they did not stand together, Dara would crush each and all of them.

The health of Shahjahan had been rapidly declining for the last few months. In September 1657 when he was in Delhi, he suddenly fell so seriously ill that for seven days he hovered between life and death. During this period, Dara took all possible care for his nursing and treatment under his constant personal

Shahjahan's illness
(September, 1657)

supervision. He was, therefore, able to tide over the crisis. But the Emperor did not hope to survive for long. He therefore decided to move to Agra so that he might die with the Taj before his eyes.

But before his departure, he had one day summoned some of the ministers to his side and had told them that they should look upon Dara as their emperor and should act according to his instructions. Just before the Emperor left for Agra he held a *darbar* at which he eulogised the merits of Dara and raised his *mansab* still higher.

During the Emperor's illness Dara did not assume the title but exercised all powers of sovereignty in the name of his father and the latter did nothing more than signing important *farmans* and affixing his seal to them. One of these *farmans* directed Mir Jumla to return to the north immediately and suspend all hostilities. By another, the office of the *wazir* was taken away from Mir Jumla and offered to Jafar Khan one of Dara's partisans. He did not want to give publicity to the news of his father's illness for fear it might cause widespread disorders and some of his brothers might rise in rebellion. The result was that all sorts of wild rumours began to be circulated. Some people asserted that the Emperor was really dead and that Dara was busy consolidating his power before making a formal announcement. They said that it was for this reason that he was summoning most of the nobles to the capital and distributing high offices among his own partisans. To complete the story, it was held that the man who appeared at the balcony was really a eunuch who was dressed up in the Emperor's robes and the Emperor's signature was declared to be forged by Dara who by constant practice had learnt to imitate it with perfection. Others said that the Emperor though alive was worse than dead for Dara was holding him in close confinement and was exerting pressure and persuasion to secure an abdication in his own favour. These rumours caused great unrest in the empire. Both Shuja and Murad declared their independence in their respective provinces and Shuja followed it up with a rapid march towards the capital and reached as far as Banaras.

The position of Dara was extremely difficult. Because of his devotion to his father he did not want to assume sovereignty publicly even on his father's exhortation as long as he was alive and at the same time he wanted to use the name of the Emperor for doing everything that might keep the power of his brothers in check, and in the event of his father's death might ensure

his accession to the throne without any hindrance. The result was that while his conduct aroused suspicion and discontent he gained no decisive advantage. The nobles of the empire looked to their own interests in such crises. They knew that Aurangzeb was the ablest and the shrewdest. Hence they felt that he might ultimately come out successful in the war of succession. They were therefore in secret correspondence with him and expressed their adherence to his cause. If Dara had boldly declared himself the Emperor, he could have easily secured the support of all waverers, for he had been advised to assume sovereignty in September and no rebel army had approached the capital even till February next. During this period of five months, his strength would have been based on such solid foundations that every noble would have thought twice before going over to any of the other princes and in the event of such defection he could be pronounced a rebel and dealt with accordingly. His other great blunder was the attempt to suppress the news of his father's illness and to neglect military preparations.

On hearing of the advance of Shuja, Shahjahan sent 22,000 soldiers under Jay Singh and Sulaiman Shikoh but he instructed Jay Singh to avoid fighting as far as

Defeat of Shuja and
his retreat to Bengal

possible and to persuade Shuja to retreat in peace. He addressed a personal letter to Shuja, directing him to return to Bengal. But Shuja paid no heed to this letter. This infuriated the Emperor so much that he sanctioned even his death. In February 1658, while Shuja lay encamped at Bahadurpur near Banaras, Sulaiman made a sudden attack and dispersed his forces. Shuja fled back to Monghyr followed by Sulaiman Shikoh, but the latter was unable to dislodge his uncle even till May 1658 when he got news of Aurangzeb's success at Dharmat and instructions to patch up a peace with Shuja and return immediately to court. A peace was therefore concluded and Shuja agreed to suspend hostilities on being assured of authority over Bengal, Orissa and eastern Bihar.

Murad proclaimed himself Emperor in September, plundered Surat to augment his resources and finalising the details of forming a joint front with Aurangzeb, proceeded at the head of his army towards Malwa and reached near Ujjain in April 1658.

Movements of
Murad

Of all the four brothers, Aurangzeb alone acted with utmost wisdom and patience. On hearing of the impending death of the Emperor and assumption of power by Dara, he started necessary preparations. He granted liberal terms to Golkunda and Bijapur and in order to keep them quiet took other diplomatic steps. He held in force all the *ghats* of the *Narbada* and enforced a strict censor of all letters from the capital. He left Muazzam in charge of the

Aurangzeb's wise
measures

Deccan with adequate forces and capable assistants. With Mir Jumla's concurrence he trumped up against him a charge of complicity with the Deccan states and on that ground seized his fine artillery and enormous treasure. He tried to restrain Murad and remonstrated against his adoption of the imperial title before the news of the Emperor's death had been confirmed beyond doubt. But at the same time he tried to keep him on his side. Meanwhile, he got the news that Shayasta Khan had been removed from the governorship of Malwa and had been replaced by Jaswant Singh whom Dara had furnished with an army with instructions to resist the advance of Aurangzeb towards the north. By another *farman* Qasim Khan was appointed the governor of Gujerat with instructions to suppress the rising of Murad who was at the same time transferred to Berar. Aurangzeb could now very well see that Dara would soon launch the offensive so that if there was anything to be done it must be done immediately. Having made all necessary preparations, he started towards the north at the head of 30,000 troops. He addressed at the same time a letter to his father stating that he had learnt that Dara had made him a prisoner and usurped all power in his own hands. This had caused serious disturbances in the empire and had made him anxious and restless. He was therefore going to the capital to reassure himself by an audience with him after releasing him from the shackles of Dara. He thus tried to cover rebellion by apparent devotion to his father. He reached near Ujjain in April and on Murad's arrival there, they formed a joint front.

Now started a game of diplomacy. Having regard for the wishes of Shahjahan, Jaswant Singh wrote to Aurangzeb that as his well-wisher he advised him not to disregard the wishes of his father and return to his province. But Aurangzeb sent him a counter-message that he had been greatly upset by all sorts of rumours about the illness of his father and was therefore going to meet him. It was improper to bar his progress at such a moment. As for the Maharaja being his well-wisher, he should give proof of it by coming to meet him alone. Murad wrote to him that the Maharaja would remember that he had promised support to him. He therefore hoped that he had come only to join his forces with him. But if he was otherwise minded, the princes were determined to go to Agra regardless of consequences. Thus Aurangzeb was completely successful in this diplomatic game for he was able to make it appear that while he was anxious to meet his father, Dara stood in the way of it and he came at the head of his troops only to force his way if necessary. Jaswant Singh thus realized that war was inevitable.

Jaswant Singh could not hope for success in an open contest because Qasim Khan who had been instructed to act as his

¹ It lay 1½ miles south-west of Ujjain

lieutenant considered it derogatory to his pride to have been placed under the command of a *Kafir* and being offended by such pre-Hindu policy of Dara had become in his heart of hearts a supporter of Aurangzeb and had adopted an attitude of veiled defiance and non-cooperation. Nor could he count on the full support of the Rajputs because they were divided by mutual jealousies. Thirdly, his choice of the field of battle had not been wise and his artillery was also comparatively inferior. In contrast to this, Aurangzeb was a seasoned general and most of his soldiers and captains were war scarred veterans. His authority was accepted on all hands and his experience and ability as a general was far superior to that of Jaswant Singh.

When fighting started, the Rajputs made a violent charge driving back the gunners and disrupting the vanguard. And a deadly fight raged all along the front. Aurangzeb moved up reinforcements to hold the line of the van and himself advanced to its support. The Rajputs performed great deeds of valour and piercing the lines of the enemy rushed up to where Murad and Aurangzeb stood and sought to kill them. But they did not succeed in the attempt. Jaswant Singh could not give adequate support to his vanguard because Qasim Khan remained practically idle and only a part of his contingent took part in fighting. Aurangzeb was, therefore, able to surround the attacking Rajputs and make clean sweep of them. When signs of defeat became visible, Qasim Khan, Ray Singh Sisodiya, Sujan Singh Bundela and Amar Singh Chandrawat took to flight. Jaswant Singh wished to pay with his life the price of loyalty to his master but his *samants* forcibly led him away to Jodhpur. Thus Aurangzeb secured a complete victory. He captured a valuable booty consisting of guns, elephants, tents and other materials and kelt down in a prayer of thanksgiving to Allah. Aurangzeb was struck by the fact that among the dead there was only one Muslim general while all others were Rajputs. This made him hopeful of receiving the support of an overwhelming majority of the Muslim generals of the Emperor. Then, desisting from pursuing the fleeing troops, he gave the impression that he was not interested in inflicting as heavy casualties as possible but only in clearing the road to Agra and meeting his father there.

Aurangzeb now advanced further ahead and reached Gwalior in May. Dara had in the meantime come as far as Dholpur. Shahjahan continued to hope till the end that his sons would not openly defy him. Therefore, he along with certain Muslim nobles desired that the princes should be allowed to come to Agra without any opposition. If after meeting him, they refused to return to their respective provinces, the Emperor would be able to overpower them easily because it would then be apparent

Aurangzeb's letter
to the Emperor

to all that they were in open rebellion. Dara was opposed to this move. He suspected the bonafides of these nobles and feared they might conspire to deprive him of his special privileges which might jeopardise even his chances of succession. He therefore wanted that the princes must be stopped on the way and should be forced to return to their provinces with permission to send their deputies to meet the Emperor at the capital and convey their messages to him. This was finally approved, and Jahanara whom all the brothers respected and who had endeared herself to them in many ways wrote a letter to Aurangzeb advising him not to oppose the elder brother and send forward his proposals in a peaceful manner. She also tried to assure him that the Emperor still directed the affairs of government. Shahjahan sent him a *farman*, directing him not to advance any further. Aurangzeb now addressed an important letter to his father in which he put all the blame for disturbances on Shahjahan and Dara. The latter ran as follows:

"At present your Majesty has no control over political or financial affairs of the state. They have been usurped by the eldest prince. He has always tried to harm me and to close all avenues of profit for me. In order to disrupt my forces, he tried to reduce my income and when after assiduous exertions I reduced the Bijapuris to a plight in which they would have been forced either to pay a heavy ransom or to suffer ransacking of their kingdom he intervened to force suspension of hostilities and incited the Bijapuris to oppose and defy me..... Taking advantage of your Majesty's ill-will against me he induced you to issue a *farman* depriving me of Berar and sent Jaswant Singh at the head of an army to deprive me of the whole of the Deccan. When I realized that your Majesty had lost all control over affairs of the state and at his instigation looked upon your other sons as enemies and issued *farmans* to his dictation I decided, in vindication of my honour, to wait on your Majesty and explain everything to you personally. Jaswant Singh tried to stand in my way and I crushed his forces. I have now learnt that Shah Buland Iqbal has reached Dholpur intent on war. As he has no chance of success against me, it would be much better for him to retire to his *jagir* in the Punjab, and I leave the service of your Majesty in my hands.

Thus efforts at reconciliation failed. Dara sent urgent summons to Sulaiman Shikoh and held all the ferries of the *Chambal* to prevent a crossing by Aurangzeb in force. But he did not depute any army to keep an eye over the movements of Aurangzeb. The result was that with the aid of Champat Ray Bundela, Aurangzeb discovered an obscure ferry and crossed the river although he lost 5000 men in the attempt because of the extreme roughness of the terrain through which he had to pass.

The Battle of Samugarh (May 1658)

Another great blunder of Dara was to keep his troops waiting idly and to allow Aurangzeb to recover from the exhaustion of a troublesome journey. In the battle of Samugarh about ten miles east of Agra, the Rajputs once more fought with great vigour and determination but most of the Muslim generals of Dara played him false. Dara's personal followers lacked experience and he himself was no match to the redoubtable Aurangzeb. Hence victory once more leaned on the side of Aurangzeb and Dara fled post haste to the capital with the victorious princes constantly at his heels.

On reaching Agra, Aurangzeb sent his apologies to the Emperor and expressed his loyalty to him. Dara had in the meantime fled to Delhi and the Emperor ^{Occupation of Agra and imprisonment of Shahjahan} had already sent *farmans* to the governors of the western provinces to stand by him. At the same time, he also tried to bring Aurangzeb under his control. Bernier and Manucci assert that he wanted to deceive Aurangzeb by soft words and to have him murdered in order to ensure Dara's succession to the throne. He is said so have made full arrangements for this. But the partisans of Aurangzeb were in no mood to come to terms. They regarded assumption of power by Dara or Shahjahan as fatal to their interests. They therefore tried to excite his suspicions and according to one version forged a letter suggestive of plans for the murders of both Murad and Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb therefore agreed to go to the Emperor only on condition that custody of gates of the fort was entrusted to his own men. The Emperor did not agree to this, and decided to stand a siege. He had hoped that the struggle would last for months together and that in the meantime supporters of Aurangzeb would begin to dwindle for fear of retribution in the event of failure. But it was too late now to hope for such a development. If Shahjahan had led his troops at Dharmat or Samugarh in person to pacify or press his sons to a fight, his efforts would have surely been crowned with success. But the power of Aurangzeb had now inordinately increased and even the supporters of Dara had gone over to him. Even the imperial agents revealed their secrets to him and he was already covered with the laurels of two great victories.

Aurangzeb cut off the supply of water from the *Jumna* so that the fort surrendered within three days. Aurangzeb occupied it on June 1, 1658 and Shahjahan became a virtual prisoner. He desired that Aurangzeb should allow his brothers certain provinces towards the east and the west and should rule over the rest of the empire but Aurangzeb did not agree to this. In the correspondence that followed between the father and the son, Aurangzeb expressed the view that he had opposed Dara only because he was friendly to the *Kafirs* and an enemy

of Islam. He was conscious of his shortcomings but in setting aside Dara, he had been guilty of no fault or else God would not have blessed him with victory. He also tried to impress on the Emperor that he was not opposed to him and did not want to disregard his wishes. But as he had supported heresy and infidelity by taking up the cause of Dara, he had been obliged to wage a *jihad* against him. Even then he was constantly busy in fomenting trouble. Hence he had to blame himself for his evil fate. He also made the bitter remark that if he remembered what he himself had done to Khusrav and Parvez, he could not possibly blame him. Thus henceforward Shahjahan had to spend the remaining eight years of his life in prison.

Having made arrangements for the government of Agra, Aurangzeb proceeded against Dara. He noticed on the way that the conduct of Murad was gradually becoming insolent and hostile. Murad desired that when Shahjahan had been divested of all authority, he should be proclaimed the sovereign of Sindh, Punjab, Kashmir and Afghanistan and formally crowned. Aurangzeb thought that it was improper to do so as long as Dara was alive. He therefore humoured Murad, eulogised his exploits, presented to him 20 lakhs of rupees and overlooked his lapses and faults. Then one day he regaled him with wine and when he was dead drunk put him under arrest and immediately rushed him to Gwalior where he was confined. In 1661, he was adjudged guilty of the murder of his own *Dewan* Ali Naqi and executed on that charge.

Dara had first gone to Delhi but he dared not stay there. He therefore went to Lahore and when Aurangzeb's generals made their appearance there, he fled to Gujrat via Multan and Sindh. There he received assurances of help from Jaswant Singh and went to Ajmer but he was once more defeated in the battle of Deorai $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of that city. He now decided to leave for Persia but was captured on the way and carried to Delhi where he was paraded through the streets of the city and then executed (August 30, 1659).

Aurangzeb had already proclaimed himself Emperor on July 21, 1658 and had had himself formally crowned. He therefore had no serious fear from the side of Dara. He could have satisfied himself as in the case of Murad with merely throwing him into prison. But his own sister Raushanara and many nobles were opposed to it. Their feeling was that only after his death plots and conspiracies against Aurangzeb would come to an end. An excuse had therefore to be found for his execution. After Aurangzeb's coronation, he could well be dubbed a rebel but the fanatical theologians of the day provided a still easier solution. They

pronounced the *fatwa* that he was an apostate from Islam and therefore deserved death. It was on that basis he was executed and in order to put all doubts in the future at rest paraded his corpse through the city before ordering its burial. Thus in August 1659 Dara's career came to an end.

When Aurangzeb had had himself crowned, he wrote to Shuja confirming him as the governor of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. At that time, Shuja was perhaps satisfied with just
 Defeat and death of Shuja (1661) that. But when he learnt that Aurangzeb had strayed far from the capital in pursuit of Dara, he suddenly decided in October to march upon Agra, effect the release of Shahjahan and acquire the imperial title with his concurrence and support. In this he met with no success because Aurangzeb had made adequate arrangements for the defence of his eastern possessions. Shuja was intercepted at Khajua. Aurangzeb also, promptly turned away from the pursuit of Dara and appeared on the scene of action. Jaswant Singh proved a traitor and had Shuja launched an attack immediately on hearing from him, he might have been victorious. But he suspected the sincerity of Jaswant Singh and feared it might be only a clever ruse to trap him. The next day a closely contested battle was fought in which at one stage Aurangzeb might have lost not only the battle but also his life. But his presence of mind and superior generalship ultimately led to his complete victory. Shuja fled, hotly pursued by the victors. Mir Jumla was appointed governor of Bengal and by 1660 Shuja was forced to surrender the whole of Bengal and seek shelter with the ruler of Arakan. According to Dutch version, he was found involved in a conspiracy and executed on that charge in 1661. Thus all the brothers died or were killed and the position of Aurangzeb became absolutely secure.

When Sulaiman Shikoh returned from Bihar, he found that his father had already left for Lahore. Hence he too hastened in the same direction. On being
 Death of Sulaiman Shikoh (1662) pursued, he sought shelter with the Raja of Srinagar. The son of the Raja finally surrendered him in 1661 to the imperial generals for fear of the wrath of the Emperor. He was imprisoned at Gwalior where he died in 1662.

The war that had begun in 1657, thus came to an end with the surrender of Sulaiman in 1661. Even after this, the new sovereign did not feel absolutely secure
 Effects of the war till 1666 and he had grounds for suspecting the loyalty of even his own son Sultan Muhammad. In 1666, Aurangzeb's position became perfectly safe. Thus the war for long years, continued to ravage the land from the Indus in the west to Bengal in the east and from the foothills of the Himalayas in the north to Malwa in the south.

As all the princes possessed well-organised forces, the toll of human lives taken by this war of succession proved to be the heaviest.

Another baneful effect of the war was a permanent change for the worse in the policy of the state. In the seventeenth century there flourished many saints and reformers who exhorted the Hindus to fight for their liberation. Some religious organisations—like the Sikhs and the Satnamis—were gradually assuming a military character. It was therefore in the interest of the empire to pursue a policy which might allay the discontent of the Hindus. During the war of succession, Aurangzeb had secured valuable assistance from certain Hindus. His success at Samugarh was largely the outcome of assistance secured from Champat Ray while in the battle of Deorai, Raja Rajrup of Jammu rendered a remarkable service. But the conduct of Jay Singh and Jaswant Singh had appeared to him selfish. Not only that, Jaswant Singh had once fought a terrible engagement against him and at another had played him false. It was he who had invited Dara from Gujerat to Rajputana. The fierceness of Rajput attack at Dharmat and Samugarh under Jaswant Singh and Chhatrasal respectively could well be interpreted to mean that they were deadly opposed to the accession of Aurangzeb. The result of all this was that Aurangzeb was driven to lean on the support of the fanatical section of the Muslims and to pursue a policy that might win their confidence and support. As conditions of war continued for a number of years even after the coronation, pro-Muslim bias became a settled fact and religious intolerance against the Hindus became a part of his policy. The result of this was that Jats, Satnamis, Sikhs, Bundelas and Rajputs rose in rebellion and the Marathas founded an independent kingdom of their own. Thus the seeds of disintegration of the empire lay embedded in this war.

Another evil consequence was the emergence of a feeling of universal distrust. Aurangzeb had made a solemn engagement with Shuja and Murad on the basis of division of the empire. But later, he gave a cold shoulder to both of them. The fault was not entirely his because, the two princes adopted an attitude of jealousy and hostility later. Aurangzeb had always had affection and good-will for his sister Jahanara. He had even received assistance from her on a number of occasions. After his coronation also, he had generally treated her well. But when he discovered that she had identified herself with Dara so completely that she wrote letters at his dictation and joined in a conspiracy with Shahjahan to engineer his arrest and murder, he lost all faith in his kith and kin. Up to 1658, Shahjahan had been unfair to Aurangzeb under the evil influence of Dara and as long as the latter prince was alive,

he continued to intrigue in his favour. He incited Muhammad Sultan to rebel against his father and never tried to effect a sincere reconciliation with Aurangzeb though on Jahanara's exhortation he had the generosity to forgive him just before he died. Brother and sister, father and son, Hindu and Muslim—each had played him false at one time or the other. Naturally therefore, he could trust nobody. He had faith and trust only in Allah who had blessed him with victory and who had chosen him as an instrument for the service of Islam because of his intelligence, ability, piety and perseverance. He thus got accustomed to make success or failure the touchstone of the justice or otherwise of his acts and gave little importance to what men thought of them. Before his conflict with the Marathas, he had been successful almost on every front. Hence his policy matured on the basis of religious discrimination and universal distrust. This too was an offshoot of this war of succession.

Many people looked upon Aurangzeb as a fratricide rebel against his father who though inwardly selfish and unscrupulous maintained a deceptive exterior of hypocritical orthodoxy. Consequently, all sense of respect for the sovereign was seriously undermined or thoroughly disappeared. This turned out to be one of the causes of a spirit of revolt which pervaded the whole land. If instead of a war of succession, Dara and Aurangzeb had acted in unison, the one as the Emperor and the other as the head of the armed forces of the empire, the roots of the Timurid empire in India would have gone deeper and the possibility of its disintegration would not have arisen so soon.

Another evil consequence of this war was a decline in moral values. Everybody changed sides according to self-interest and no heed was paid to principles or sentiments of devotion, honour or uprightness. The sons of Aurangzeb emulated the example of their father and each busied himself with the thought of ensuring his succession. They acted in collusion with the rebels, played false to the Emperor and as in the case of Muhammad and Akbar, even sought to depose him to capture the throne. There was no love lost between the three brothers. They regarded each other as obstacles in their way and in order to humiliate one another indulged in intrigues and conspiracies and even offered secret assistance to the enemy. Thus the servants of the empire became its worst enemies and discipline and honesty became a thing of the past. This assumed such dangerous proportions that in 1680 during the war in Rajputana and in 1682-83 in the war against the Marathas even Aurangzeb, for a time, was at his wit's end and could not decide what to do and throughout the period from 1663 to 1706 evidence continued to pour in that his sons and generals were ever willing to accept enemy gold as a price for their neglecting imperial orders.

Factions began to arise among the nobles as well. They were generally formed on three bases: (1) Support to a prince to ensure his succession to the throne (2) religious sentiment and (3) racial and national differences. In course of time, these factions became so powerful and sharply divided that they reduced the Emperor to a puppet and ensured rapid disintegration of the empire.

It would, therefore, not be improper to say that the disintegration of the empire began with the war of succession fought among the sons of Shahjahan which gave birth to such forces and tendencies as gathered strength with lapse of time and finally shattered it to pieces.

Aurangzeb had five sons, the eldest being Sultan Muhammad who was born in 1639. He enjoyed the affection and confidence of his father during his youth. Muhammad Sultan (1639-1676) Aurangzeb had proposed a marriage between him and the daughter of Shuja and even on Shahjahan's pressure had refused to break the engagement. In his war against the Qutbshah, Aurangzeb had sent Sultan Muhammad at the head of the advance party and in order to secure submission of the Qutbshah had demanded his daughter's hand in marriage with Muhammad Sultan. During the war of succession, he had kept him by his side and had entrusted to him the most onerous task of keeping an eye over Shahjahan. Later, when Shuja moved towards the capital, Muhammad Sultan was appointed the commander-in-chief of the army sent against him. But Muhammad was not destined to greatness. His ambition took the better of his discretion. Hence he once thought of joining in a conspiracy with his grandfather, while in 1660, he decided to join Shuja and marry his daughter in the hope of capturing the throne with his assistance. The result was that from 1650 to his death in December 1676, he had to spend his days in prison.

Muazzam and Muhammad Sultan were real brothers and were born of the daughter of Raja Raju of Kashmir. Ever since the incarceration of Muhammad Sultan, Muhammad Muazzam (1643-1743) his influence began to increase and he got the title of Shah Alam. This suggests that Aurangzeb desired to follow the principle of primo-geniture. For many years, he had acted as the Viceroy of the Deccan and had taken part in its wars. But it was always suspected that instead of destroying the power of the Marathas or of Bijapur and Golkunda he wanted to remain on friendly terms with them so that he might secure their assistance in the future war of succession. In 1687, his conduct was found to be particularly blame-worthy and he was thrown into prison. But his behaviour inside the prison so gratified the Emperor that he released

him in 1695 and appointed him Governor of different provinces. At the time of the Emperor's death, he was the Governor of Kabul. Muazzam had also tried to cultivate good relations with the Sikhs and the Rajputs. Thus he was the only person among the sons of Aurangzeb whose relations with the Hindus were fairly cordial.

Azam, the third son of Aurangzeb was born of Dilras Banu Begam, the daughter of Shah Nawaz Khan Saawi. He enjoyed the title of 'Alijah' and thought that the Emperor loved him the most and would nominate him as heir to the throne. The

Muhammad Azam 1653-1707
 grounds for such a belief were (1) that while he was born of a Muslim lady of a distinguished family, his elder brothers were born of Hindu mothers, (2) that the Emperor was perhaps dissatisfied with Muazzam because of his hob-nobbing with the Hindus and (3) that the dignity of Muazzam had been considerably lowered after his imprisonment on grounds of treason in 1667. About the time of the death of the Emperor, he had been directed to proceed to Malwa although he did not want to do so. He tried to consolidate his power before the death of the Emperor but the latter did not give him any special encouragement although at his request he summoned Muazzam's son Azim to his side.

About Akbar we have already noticed how he conspired to depose his father in alliance with the Rajputs and the Marathas and how he had ultimately to leave Akbar 1657-1704 for Persia in despair. The Emperor tried to call him back by sending him assurances of forgiveness but Akbar would not trust him and died in exile in 1704.

The last and the youngest son of Aurangzeb was Kam Bakhsh, born in 1667 when the Emperor had attained the age of 50 years. His mother exercised great influence over the Emperor. Hence the infancy and early youth of Kam Bakhsh were spent in an atmosphere of paternal affection. He developed an undue fondness for him and was much worried about his future. It was to ensure his future security that he had tried to come to terms with the Marathas although the attempt did not prove successful.

Aurangzeb had been so cautious that although he had attained the age of 90, he retained control over affairs of state to the very end and none of his sons was able to impose himself on him. At the time of his death, only three of them were alive—Muazzam, Azam and Kam Bakhsh. The Emperor knew full well how ruinous a war of succession could be. He therefore partitioned the empire among his sons and appealed to them

The will of
Aurangzeb.

not to engage in a fratricidal war. He had placed this will under his pillow and it was discovered only after his death. According to this will, the provinces of Bijapur and Hyderabad were assigned to Kam Bakhsh while the rest of the empire was almost equally divided between Muazzam and Azam. He wanted that they should desist from war and by mutual agreement one should hold Delhi while the other got Agra. The former was to receive the provinces of Delhi, Punjab, Kabul, Multan, Thatta, Kashmir, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Allahabad and Awadh while the latter was to have the provinces of Agra, Malwa, Gujerat, Aimer, Khandesh, Berar, Aurangabad and Bidar. Considering the position of the two princes, the Emperor probably desired that Muazzam should receive the old capital Delhi and the 11 provinces listed with it while Azam should accept the new capital Agra and the 8 provinces listed with that. According to this partition both Muazzam and Azam were to receive provinces bearing an annual total revenue of about 500 crore *dams*. While Kam Bakhsh's share was to yield an annual revenue of a little over 200 crore *dams*.

But as soon as Aurangzeb died, a scramble for power began. Azam was the first to get the news of his death and soon repaired to Ahmadnagar where most of the nobles acclaimed him as the next Emperor. On March 14, 1707 he had himself crowned, issued coins bearing his name and adopted the style of Abul Faiz Qutbuddin Muhammad Azam Shah Ghazi. But Azam's behaviour and his leanings towards the Shia faith soon antagonised the Turani nobles and they refused to march to the north. Azam wanted to reach Agra as early as possible. Hence instead of quarreling with Firoz Jang and Chingilich Khan, he appointed them governors of Aurangabad and Burhanpur. Being in undue haste, he neglected Kam Bakhsh for he knew that the real struggle lay with Muazzam.

Azam's son Bedar Bakht was a zealous commander and an able administrator. He made a wise suggestion that he should move rapidly to occupy Delhi and Agra or at least Agra. But Azam feared that with the capital in his hands he might try to assume the imperial crown himself. He therefore directed Bedar to meet him in Malwa from where they would jointly proceed towards Agra. Hence Bedar Bakht wasted fifty precious days idly waiting for his father. After Azam's arrival, he reached Gwalior as late as June.

In the meantime, Muazzam had acquired considerable power in northern India. It was on March 22 at Jamrud that he got the news of his father's death and he promptly proceeded towards India. He directed his son Muizuddin to proceed from Thatta and Multan to Lahore to form a junction with him there. Lahore was at this time held by Munim Khan, one of

his own partisans and a very able and farsighted man. Having regard to future requirements, he had collected a large number of boats and recruited and equipped a large force on the excuse of threat of local disturbances. Hence Muazzam found no difficulties on the way and reached the confines of Lahore in May 1707. Before crossing the *Ravi*, he had himself crowned at a place called the Bridge of Shahdaula and assumed the style of Bahadur Shah. On the 1st of June he reached Delhi and on the 12th entered Agra. He had collected 65 lakhs of rupees, a numerous soldiery and some fine artillery during his progress to the capital. His son Azim who was the governor of Bihar and Bengal had already occupied Agra and brought to it 20,000 soldiers and 11 crores of rupees. On Bahadur Shah's arrival, the citadel was also occupied and the new Emperor secured 24 crores of rupees besides a huge stock of ammunition and other supplies. Out of this 4 crores were distributed among princes, nobles and soldiers which made them his zealous supporters. As Bahadur Shah was known to be favourable to the Hindus, many Rajputs also joined his ranks. At the same time, he kept the Muslims also satisfied.

Bahadur Shah addressed a letter to Azam proposing that he should respect the wishes of their father and should be satisfied with Gujerat, Ajmer and the four provinces of the Deccan or if he insisted on war he should avoid needless bloodshed of the faithful by agreeing to fight a single combat

The battle of Jajau
and death of Azam
(June 1707)

with him on condition that the victor should succeed to the undivided empire. Azam rejected the offer in the hope of seizing the whole empire by a successful war. Their respective armies came face to face about four miles from Jajau near Samugarh and were soon locked in a close contest. Bedar Bakht secured initial success and if Azam had sent him timely support there might have been some hope of success. But he delayed doing so. In the meantime Bahadur Shah rushed reinforcements to the assistance of his son Azim and started a heavy bombardment with his guns. On Azam's side, Ram Singh Hada and Rao Dalpat Bundela were killed. Kham Alam also paid with his life. Zulfiqar Khan fled to Gwalior and Jay Singh Kachhwaha crossed over to the enemy. Azam, his son Bedar Bakht and Walijah were also among the dead. Thus Bahadur Shah secured a complete victory. He treated the prisoners well and assured the children and grandchildren as well as other dependants of Azam of his protection and care.

There were many reasons that accounted for Azam's defeat. His artillery was not good and his soldiers had been exhausted by a long journey, burning heat and scarcity of water. His officers were dissatisfied with him and played him false. He also lacked in adequate financial resources and by delaying the occupation of Agra, he unduly tilted the balance in favour of his adversary.

As soon as Kam Bakhsh heard about the death of his father, he adopted the title of Din Panah, had himself crowned and issued coins bearing his name. Azam had let him alone. Bahadur Shah also did not want to do anything against him in deference to the wishes of his father. But he soon learnt

Defeat and death
of Kam Bakhsh
(Jan. 1709)

that he was acting in a most tyrannical manner so that there was great discontent in the Deccan. He therefore proceeded towards the south and crossed the *Narbada* in May 1708. From there he sent Kam Bakhsh a letter full of generous sentiments and expressive of the victories he had achieved. He thus tried to impress upon him his strength as well as his good-will and sympathy for him. But Kam Bakhsh did not commit himself to accepting his suzerainty. On the contrary, he started preparations for war. Hence Bahadur Shah was forced into a war against him. The nobles and the soldiers of Kam Bakhsh were so dissatisfied with him that with the exception of about 300-400 people all of them deserted to Bahadur Shah. Kam Bakhsh was mortally wounded in the course of fighting and although Bahadur Shah treated him with great affection and provided him the best medical aid available, he succumbed to his injuries the same night. Thus this war of succession came to an end and the authority of Bahadur Shah became undisputed.

The position of Bahadur Shah had become secure ever since the defeat and death of Azam and he had adopted all the privileges and prerogatives of the imperial office since then. He held a durbar and conferred new titles on his sons. Muizuddin (1661-1731) was given the title of Jahandar Shah Bahadur and the governorship of Thatta and Multan. Muhammad Azim (1664-1712) was given the title of Azim-us-Shan and the governorship of Bengal and Patna. Rafi-ul-Qadr (1670-1712) received the title of Rafi-us-Shan Bahadur and the governorship of Kabul. Khujista Akhtar (1673-1712) got the title of Jahan Shah Bahadur and governorship of Malwa. They were given the *Mansabs* of 30,000 *Ṣat*, 20,000 *sawar* and they were permitted to appoint deputy governors for their provinces. Munim Khan and his sons were also granted new titles and they were conciliated by the award of rich gifts and high *mansabs*. Munim Khan also received the post of the *Wazir*. Asad Khan and his son were forgiven and considering the status and past experience of Asad Khan the Emperor appointed him *Vakil-i-Mutlaq* while his son was made his deputy and held the office of *Mir Bakhshi*. In order to prevent a quarrel between Asad Khan and Munim Khan, the former was sent away as governor of Delhi while Munim Khan remained incharge of the Central Government.

Bahadur Shah was a man of a very liberal disposition and as far as possible wanted to keep all sections satisfied. He therefore gave a general amnesty to all and all the partisans of Azam and Kam Baksh who were willing to enter his service were reconciled by the award of suitable *mansabs* and offices. Munim Khan was by no means haughty and desired that for a proper settlement of the kingdom, peace should be restored in all the provinces as soon as possible. Hence a liberal and tolerant policy recommended itself both to the Emperor and his Wazir.

In the reign of Bahadur Shah, three incidents deserve special mention (1) Rebellion of the Rajputs, (2) Sikh disturbances and (3) Partial recognition to Shiaism and opposition by the Sunnis. Of these the first two have already been spoken of in the last two chapters. Because of his benevolence Bahadur Shah overlooked the fault of joint rebellion by Maharana Amar Singh of Mewar, Raja Jay Singh of Amber and Maharaja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and on their tendering an apology allowed them, on the terms of their own choosing, to rule freely in their respective spheres of authority. He tried his utmost to crush the power of the Sikhs but he did not meet with complete success in this respect. Because of his Shia leanings, he made a little change in the *Khutba* prayer but when it threatened to provoke a rising, he reverted back to the old practice.

In February 1712, he breathed his last. "Bahadur Shah" says Sarkar "had a mild and calm temper, great dignity of behaviour, and excessive and inconsiderate generosity of disposition. He was learned and pious, without any bigotry...He was incapable of saying no to anybody, and his only idea of statesmanship was to let matters drift and patch up a temporary peace by humouring everybody without facing issues and saving future trouble by making decisions promptly and courageously. Still, the traditions of the dignity of the empire and of good administration left by Aurangzeb, continued through his short reign, as he inherited his father's able officers and treated them with confidence and respect". It was contrary to his policy to conspire against his own ministers or to disregard their views as was done by his successors. To that extent, he may be described as relatively more successful than any of them.

In the reign of Bahadur Shah, Zulfiqar Khan had not been able to realize his ambitions. On his death, he tried to secure the highest place in the state. He knew that among the sons of the late Emperor, Azim-us-Shan was the ablest and the most powerful. Immediately after his father's death, he had collected all his troops. But because of disorders in the camp he could not do anything promptly. In this state of uncertainty, Zulfiqar Khan persuaded all the other three princes to put up a joint oppo-

Jahandar Shah
(1712-1713)

sition against Azim-us-Shan. After victory they were to divide the empire between them and appoint Zulfiqar Khan as their common *Wazir*. He now quickly raised an army and surrounded Azim-us-Shan from three sides. In the war that followed, Azim-us-Shan was finally defeated and his elephant fled towards the *Ravi* wounded, it was caught in quick-sand and Azim-us-Shan along with his elephant was buried alive.

Zulfiqar now took the side of Jahandar Shah. Hence Jahan Shah and Rafi-us-Shan attacked him one after the other. But they were not only defeated but also killed in the course of fighting. Thus with Zulfiqar's aid Jahandar Shah became the Emperor.

At the time of Bahadur Shah's death, Azim-us-Shan's son Farrukhsiyar was the governor of Bengal. He was coming to the capital for the assistance of his father. But he learnt on the way that his father had died and Jahandar Shah had already mounted the throne. Jahandar Shah's infatuation for Lal Kumari, a prostitute, polluted the entire atmosphere at the capital because she became the conscience-keeper of the Emperor. In order to perpetuate his power, Zulfiqar Khan persecuted all the nobles who had opposed Jahandar Shah. Their property was confiscated and many of them were executed. Jahandar Shah replaced them by friends and kinsmen of Lal Kumari. They had neither capacity for government nor the dignity appropriate to high office. Because of their presence, the influence of Zulfiqar Khan also began to be undermined and a serious rivalry began at the court. The Persian group led by Zulfiqar Khan was now opposed in an organised manner by the Turani party. Thus conditions at the capital continued to deteriorate from bad to worse.

All this proved advantageous to Farrukhsiyar. He now began to dream of capturing the throne by force. On reaching Patna, he declared himself Emperor in April. Husain Ali Sayyad the deputy governor at Patna sided with him and a little later his elder brother Hasan, deputy Governor at Allahabad also joined him. These people decided to set aside both the Irani and the Turani nobles and to capture power for the Hindustani group with Farrukhsiyar as the puppet in their hands. The capital-bound treasure was seized, all Indian and foreign traders were subjected to a levy and a large army was recruited. By slow marches, they now proceeded towards the capital at the head of their army. Many other people joined them on the way and flocked round their banner so that their resources in men and money continued to increase.

The first engagement was fought in November near Khajuraho. Jahandar Shah's forces suffered a defeat and retreated towards the capital. Farrukhsiyar captured a large booty and the mor-

Rebellion by
Farrukhsiyar
(April 1712)

ale of his troops went up. In January 1713, a decisive battle was fought near Agra. Jahandar Shah was personally present on the field of battle. His army was also superior and had the advantage of being led by a commander of the calibre of Zulfiqar Khan. But his force lacked cohesion and unity because of the pernicious influence of the Emperor. The result was that the Turani group took practically no part. Zulfiqar Khan remained a silent spectator for some time and then marched away to Delhi at the head of his forces. Shortly after the opening of the hostilities, the Jats fell upon the imperial camp and carried away much booty including a number of elephants. On the contrary, the army of Farrukhsiyar, though numerically inferior was strongly held together by the Sayyad Brothers and their valour and heroism brought him complete victory. Jahandar Shah had his beard and moustache shaved off and fled to Delhi incognito.

Farrukhsiyar now had himself crowned. Many nobles flocked round him solicitous of his favours. He now entered Agra while Hasan Ali attacked Delhi.

In the meantime the position of Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan became very critical. They knew that there was now no chance for success of Jahandar Shah. They also knew that Farrukhsiyar must be nursing a grievance against them because of Zulfiqar's conspiracy against Azim-us-shan. They therefore acted with their eye only on their self-interest. As soon as Jahandar Shah arrived, they confined him within the fort and informing Farrukhsiyar of this prayed for his favour. When Hasan Ali reached Delhi, they made no opposition. They even put Jahandar Shah to death in compliance with the orders of the new Emperor whose position thus became free from anxiety.

Farrukhsiyar appointed Hasan Ali as the *Wazir* and conferred on him the title of Qutb-ul-mulk Zafar Jang Sipahsalar. His younger brother Husain Ali got the post of *Mir Bakhshi* and the title of Amir-ul-umara Firoz Jang. Muhammad Amin Khan, the leader of the Turani party was made the second *Bakhshi*. Asad Khan and Zulfiqar Khan were first induced to come by assurances but Zulfiqar was later killed while Asad Khan died in 1716 after suffering great humiliation and indignities. As a sop to the Hindus, the *jizya* was dropped.

The war that followed the death of Aurangzeb had provided an opportunity to many vassal chiefs and provincial Governors to throw off their allegiance or disregard the authority of the Emperor. The weak policy of Bahadur Shah gave further encouragement to this attitude. The war that followed the death of Bahadur Shah eliminated most of the experienced officers of

Aurangzeb. Their places were often taken by men without experience or force of character. The scramble for power among the nobles led to great dissensions, mutual jealousies and selfish intrigues. Each group sought to dominate the Emperor and to grab all power for itself. Jahandar Shah and Farrukhsiyar lacked the strength to keep their nobles under control or uphold their dignity and thus check the process of disintegration. Henceforward started the practice of having puppet emperors and the power of the Central Government rapidly declined because of factions among the nobles and revolts by provincial governors. The former awe and respect for the emperor did not therefore long continue.

Farrukhsiyar had secured the throne with the aid of the Sayyad Brothers and had therefore given them the highest offices in consideration for the same. But his personal friends and advisers became jealous of their power and began to conspire against them. Among them Mir Jumla deserves special mention. Farrukhsiyar sincerely desired that he should be a real sovereign and act according to his own judgment. But he possessed neither the courage nor the grit. The result was that he could not openly oppose his ministers. But he engaged in secret conspiracies against them. Sometimes he sent secret instructions against his own written orders. Thus he directed Husain Ali to march against Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and sent secret instructions to the latter to imprison Husain Ali. Similarly, he first appointed Husain Ali as the Viceroy of the Deccan and then directed Daud Khan to put up an opposition against him. But he was unable to do anything openly. At the instigation of his advisers he would sometime offer the wazirship to one nobleman and then to another and expected them to murder the Sayyad Brothers by their own exertions. But when they failed to do anything or dismayed by the Emperor's weakness and inconsistency went over to the Sayyad Brothers, he himself would go to them and flatter them and even offer his turban to them. The result was that the condition of the empire continued to deteriorate. Nobody could, therefore, have any respect for the Emperor. His orders were disregarded with impunity and 'might is right' became the order of the day.

Husain Ali now decided to depose the emperor, and in this secured the concurrence of his brother also. Farrukhsiyar was deposed and replaced by Rafi-ud-darjat the son of Rafi-us-shan. The deposed Emperor was blinded and thrown into prison where he was later murdered. Irvine says that the Sayyad Brothers did no injustice in deposing or blinding him but his murder or imprisonment was hardly necessary. Ajit Singh the father-in-law of Farrukhsiyar also sided with the Sayyad Brothers in

Farrukhsiyar and the Sayyad Brothers

Deposition and death of Farrukhsiyar (1719)

procuring his murder which won for him great infamy of being the murderer of his own son-in-law.

If Farrukhsiyar had exhibited even the least courage, he would not have suffered such a fate. Raja Jay Singh of Amber had repeatedly advised him to attack the Sayyad Brothers and had pledged support of his 20,000 men. Nizam-ul-mulk also had originally decided to side with him. But when he discovered that he was utterly worthless, he did nothing while Mahammad Amin Khan supported the stand taken by the Sayyad Brothers. The deposition and murder of the emperor lowered the prestige of the emperor so much that the next three sovereigns were mere puppets.

Rafi-ud-darjat soon died of consumption. His elder brother Rafi-ud-Daula was then placed on the throne. He too died shortly after. Just then Nekusiyar was raised to the throne and he tried to win over the Sayyad Brothers. But the latter elevated Jahan Shah's son Raushan Akhtar to the throne under the style of Muhammad Shah.

Muhammad Shah was more capable than the preceding sovereigns. But he too lacked the vigour to exercise real authority over the whole empire. His greatest apprehension was that the Sayyad Brothers might depose him also. He therefore decided to put an end to them. Chhabila Ram Nagar, the Governor of Allahabad, Jay Singh, the Raja of Amber, Nizam-ul-Mulk the Governor of Malwa and Muhammad Amin Khan, the second *Bakhshi* were hostile to the Sayyads. Muhammad Shah tried to win over Nizam-ul-Mulk to his side. With a view to reduce the power of Husain Ali, Nizam-ul-mulk attacked Khandesh and after capturing Asirgarh, proceeded towards the south. Husain Ali's nephew was defeated and killed in a battle with Nizam-ul-mulk. On hearing this, Husain Ali, accompanied by the Emperor marched against Nizam-ul-mulk but he was murdered on the way. Ratan Chand informed Abdullah of the murder of his younger brother. But Ratan Chand was later himself arrested and executed at the time of war against Abdullah. Abdullah on his defeat was first thrown into prison and later poisoned to death in 1722 when his intrigues were unearthed.

This apparently strengthened the position of Muhammad Shah. Girdhar Bahadur, the governor of Awadh, Jay Singh of Amber, Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, Nizam-ul-mulk, the governor of the Deccan and other nobles and amirs acknowledged his authority and sent him presents. He appointed Muhammad Amin as the *Wazir* and when the latter died offered his place to Nizam-ul-mulk. Nizam-ul-mulk tried to govern with a strong hand. He wanted to establish his authority over the whole of

the empire by coming to terms with the Marathas in the Deccan and acting as the *Wazir* in the north. In this he met with no success and opposition to his rule soon started. At first the governor of Gujerat was instigated against him and when Nizam-ul-mulk set him aside and brought Gujerat under his direct control, Mubariz Khan his deputy in the Deccan was incited to rebellion. Nizam-ul-mulk saw through the game and proceeded to the south. He fought an engagement against Mubariz Khan in which the latter was killed. Thus from 1724, he began to rule over the Deccan like an independent prince while Muhammad Shah found himself helpless and could do nothing against him.

Gradually, the Turani party acquired more and more power. Lawlessness overtook the different provinces and the rebellions of Jats, Bundelas, Sikhs, Marathas and the Rajputs began to assume more dangerous proportions. Just then occurred the invasion of Nadir Shah as will be related in a subsequent chapter. The cumulative result of this was that the power of the Emperor declined still further and his authority over Rajasthan, Gujerat, Malwa, Deccan, Awadh, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Kabul practically ceased.

After Muhammad Shah's death, his son Ahmad Shah became the ruler. During his reign, the rivalry between the Irani and Turani groups became very acute and there was once an occasion when the two parties remained locked in a violent struggle in the capital itself, for six months. Another important event of this period is the recurrence of foreign invasions. Ahmad Shah Abdali led a number of invasions into the land and seized Multan and the Punjab. The power of the Marathas also increased enormously and control of the centre over the provinces practically came to an end. Powerful nobles now did not bother about the wishes of the Emperor and seized whatever post or province they could and the Emperor was obliged to give his approval to all such usurpations. During this period there was a fierce rivalry between Ghaziuddin and Safdar Jang in which Ghaziuddin finally succeeded not only in driving Safdar Jang to Awadh but even in securing the dismissal of his own kinsman Intzāmuḍḍaula in order to obtain the office of the *Wazir* for himself. He then deposed the Emperor and placed Jahandar Shah's son Azizuddin on the throne under the style of Alamgir II

Alamgir II was a very weak-kneed person. During his reign the disturbances of the last reign gradually assumed alarming proportions. He quarrelled with Ghaziuddin who deposed and killed him. He was replaced by the grandson of Kam

Ahmad Shah
(1748-1754)

Alamgir II
(1754-1759)

Bakhsh under the style of Shahjahan III. But no important noble recognized his authority.

After Alamgir's death, his son aspired for the throne but he did not receive any substantial support from any quarter.

Shah Alam
(1759-1806)

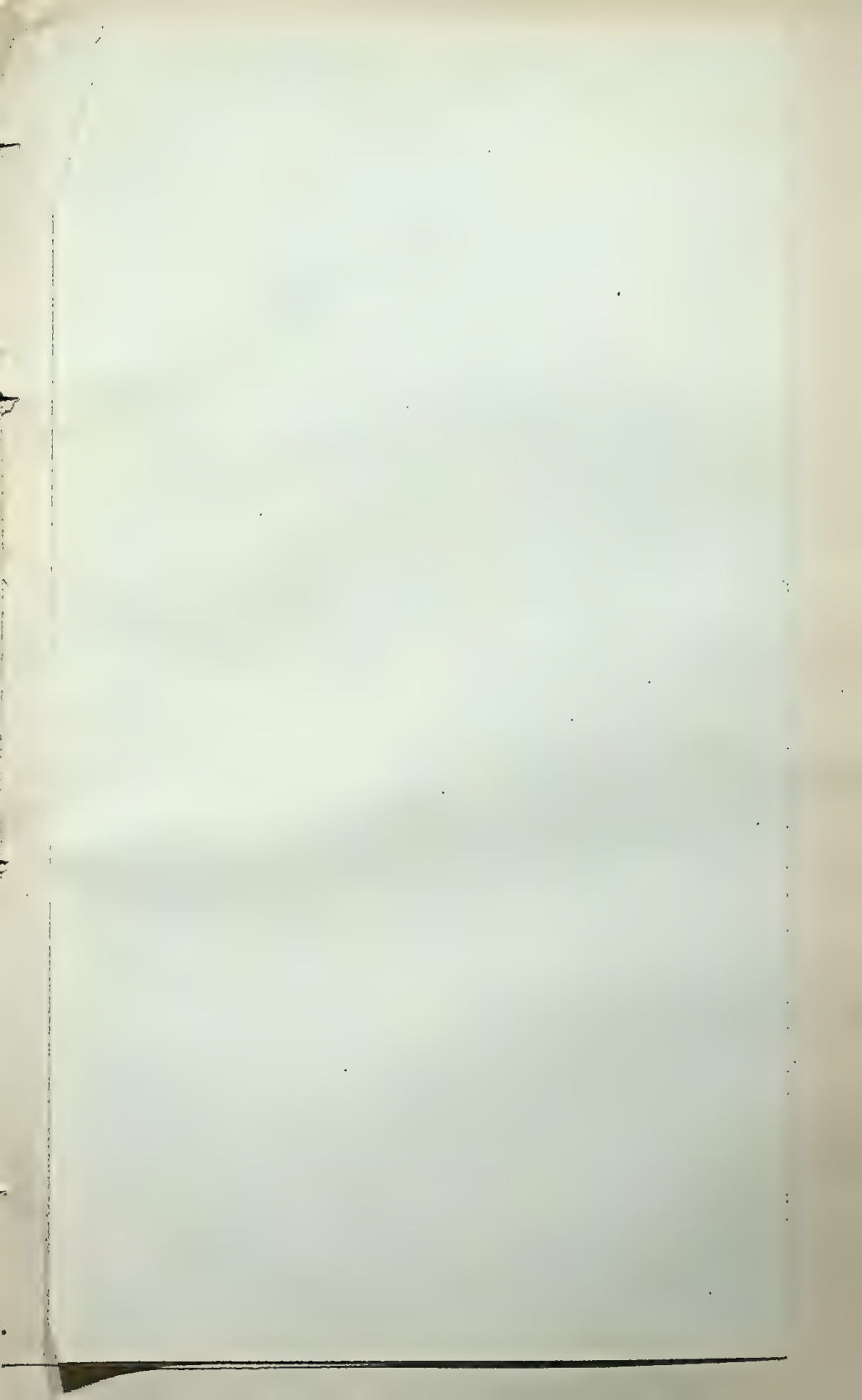
Finally, in 1761 after the third battle of Panipat, Ahmad Shah Abdali recognized him as the Emperor and appointed Shujaudaula the governor of Awadh as his *Wazir*. Henceforth the dignity of the Emperor practically came to an end and he was deprived even of the privilege of staying in the capital. He would sometimes lean on the support of the Marathas and at others knocked at the door of a foreign company. Later he was blinded and spent his days in great misery. Before he died, the sovereignty over India passed into the hands of the British. After him there were only two more nominal Emperors—Akbar II (1805-1837) and Bahadur Shah II (1837-1857). But they were at the mercy of the British East India Company, and at the time of the First war of Indian Independence when Bahadur Shah threw in his lot with the opponents of the Company, he was deprived even of the nominal title of the Emperor and was exiled to Rangoon to languish in prison.

Thus the dynasty founded by Babar and Akbar came to an end. On account of an indefinite law of succession not only were there violent struggles at the death of each ruler but even in their life-time, there were often witnessed, intrigues and conspiracies, rebellions and factious fights. It was the absence of any definite rule that enabled powerful nobles to set aside abler persons at will in order to replace them by a weaker men. Thus began a line of puppet rulers during whose regime lawlessness and disorder continued to increase.

This state of affairs proved of great advantage to the Marathas, provincial governors and foreign invaders. A brief account of which is given in the subsequent chapters.

Further Readings

1. R. B. Williams—*An Empire-Builder of the sixteenth Century*.
2. Erskine—*History of India*, Vols. I & II
3. Banerji—*Humayun Padshah*, Vols. I & II
4. Smith—*Akbar the Great Mughal*.
5. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*.
6. Saksena—*Shahjahan of Dihel*.
7. Qarungo—*Dara Shukoh*.
8. Faruki—*Aurangzeb and his Times*.
9. Sarkar—*Short History of Aurangzeb*.
10. Sarkar—*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vols. I & II.
11. Irvine—*Later Mughals* (Ed. by Sarkar) Vol. I & II.
12. Cambridge—*History of India*, Vol. IV.
13. Tripathi—*Rise and Fall of the Mughal Empire*.
14. Sharma—*Mughal Empire in India*.





Bakhsh
noble re

After
he did i

Shah Ala
(1759-180

the gove
of the E
even of
sometim
knocked
blinded
sovereign
After hi
Akbar
But they
and at t
Bahadur
Compan
Emperor

Thu
end. O
were the
in their
conspirac
of any de
abler per
Thus be
lessness a

This
Maratha:
account

1. R
2. E
3. B
4. S
5. B
6. S
7. Q
8. F
9. S
10. S
11. Ir
12. C
13. T
14. Si

CHAPTER XVII

MARATHA EXPANSION UNDER THE PESHWAS

We have noticed in a previous chapter how Aurangzeb continued for 45 years measures of subjugating the Marathas and how he spent the last 25 years of his life in personally superintending and directing the measures adopted against them. During this period, the Marathas were on certain occasions reduced to great straits and one of their Chhatrapatis suffered a humiliating death. But although he occupied most of their forts and districts, he could not destroy their spirit of independence. He had first attributed the success of the Marathas to assistance of the Deccan sultanates and indolence of his own generals. But he failed to crush the Marathas even after destroying the Deccan sultanates and he was ultimately driven to think of coming to terms with them. His death provided the Marathas a golden opportunity to expand their power because most of the experienced generals and soldiers left the Deccan for participation in the war of succession, while Kam Bakhsh who remained behind lacked the ability to control even his own followers because of his cruel ways. Bahadur Shah and his successors remained occupied in the north and particularly in the capital itself that they could not pay any serious attention to the affairs in the Deccan. This facilitated Maratha expansion.

Shahu was born in 1682 when a so-called Timurid Emperor was soliciting support at his father's court. But his father lacked the ability and the foresight to make full use of it at the time. The result was that Chhatrapati Shahu (1708-1749) Shahu at the early age of 7 had become a captive in the hands of the real Mughal Sovereign and had to spend the next 18 years of his life under his tutelage. This was a very critical period in the life of Shahu for his life and religion were at the mercy of the Emperor. But his mother's sagacity and the strength of the Marathas saved him from any catastrophe.

When in 1707, after the death of Aurangzeb, Azam proclaimed himself the Emperor and proceeded to the north, Shahu and other members of his family had also to accompany him. Shahu appealed to Azam for permission to return to his homeland and assured him of his subservience and vassalage. As Azam was in a great hurry to go to the north he did not want to take the trouble of looking into the affair of Shahu. But Zulfiqar

Khan's suggestion that the release of Shahu would be beneficial to the empire because it would immediately lead to a civil war among the Marathas, between Shahu and the descendants of Raja Ram, appealed to him as Maratha attacks against the empire would cease and they would be unable to take advantage of disturbances caused by the war of succession. But Azam took no decision. The followers of Shahu also exerted themselves to secure his release but to no purpose.

At this stage, Zinat-un-nisa the sister of Azam advised Shahu to leave the Mughal camp without permission, leaving behind some of the members of his family so that it might not be construed as a flight from the camp. Acting on her advice, Shahu parted company with Azam in Malwa and came away to the Deccan. It is said that before he left the camp terms of treaty had already been agreed upon and Jotyaji Kesarkar had been left behind to receive Shahu's copy from the Mughals. According to this treaty (1) Shahu was recognized as a vassal prince with authority over the 'Swarajya' founded by his grandfather, (2) he was to be under an obligation to render military assistance to the Emperor, (3) he was to have the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the six *subas* of the Deccan, and (4) he had to leave his mother, his step-brother Madan Singh and some other members of the family as hostages with the Emperor.

Shahu informed Maratha leaders of his return and directed them to be ready with their contingents for his assistance. He soon secured the support of a large number of people including Mohan Singh of Vijaygarh, Rawat Sujan Singh of Lambarani, Amrit Rao Kadambande and many influential Brahmins. On learning this other more powerful people also offered their support. Among the latter, special mention needs to be made of Parsoji Bhonsle, Jagirdar of Berar and Haibat Rao Nimbalkar, Rustam Rao Jadav, Chinnaji Damodar and Nemaji Sindhia, deputed in Baglana and Khandesh.

But his aunt Tarabai was not pleased with his restoration. She wanted that her son Shivaji II, crowned in 1700 should continue as the *Chhatrapati*. The stand she took was that, with the death of Shambhuji the former Maratha kingdom had come to an end. It was after passing through many vicissitudes that Raja Ram had founded a new kingdom for the integrity of which Tarabai herself had been exerting herself for the last so many years. The descendants of Shambhuji had no claims on this new kingdom. She went to the length of asserting that Shahu was an impostor while the real Shahu was still in confinement with the Mughals.

Shahu wanted to avoid a civil war. He therefore avoided taking the initiative himself. Besides, he lacked the support

of any trained army. But Tarabai herself launched the attack and the respective armies came face to face on the northern bank of the *Bhima*. Shahu was able to win over Dhanaji Jadhav, the commander-in-chief of Tarabai through the good offices of Khando Ballal, Balaji Vishwanath and Naroji Ram. This led to the defeat of Tarabai and the number of Shahu's followers began to increase. According to Sardesai, the Marathas were conscious of Tarabai's high merits but they could not lose sight of the fact that she could not succeed to the throne while her son was utterly incompetent to run the government. It was therefore natural that they should align themselves with Shahu and recognize him as their *Chhatrapati*.

After this victory, Shahu proceeded towards Satara. Dhanaji Jadhav, the *Senapati* accompanied him. Tarabai left for Panhala entrusting the defence of the fort to the care of Parashuram Pant *Pratinidhi*. But Shahu captured the fort and was formally crowned in January 1708.

Shahu was by nature mild and generous. He was conscious of the evil consequences of a civil war. He, therefore, made another effort to conciliate Tarabai but she was unwilling to submit to his authority. The siege of Panhala was therefore pressed with vigour and on its fall, Tarabai who was in flight was given a hot chase but the rains intervened to bring the hostilities to a close for the time being.

Shahu had to face many difficulties on account of Tarabai's opposition. The power that could have been employed in liberating the 'Swarajya' and exacting *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from imperial agents was frittered away in fighting against her. Shahu's principal advisers were (1) Bahiro Pant Pingle *Peshwa* (2) Balaji Vishwanath, (3) Khando Ballal *Chitnis* and (4) Gadadhar Prahlad *Pratinidhi*. If Dhanaji Jadhav had lived a little longer, he might have smashed the power of the supporters of Tarabai but he suddenly died in June 1708 and was succeeded by his son Chandrasen Jadhav in the office of the *Senapati*.

Just about this time Bahadur Shah came to the south and demanded military assistance from Shahu. As Bahadur Shah had succeeded in the war of succession Shahu sent him Raybhanji Bhonsle and Gadadhar Prahlad *Pratinidhi* to secure a *sanad* empowering him to realize *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. But Tarabai also sent her agents to make a similar demand. Consequently Shahu failed to secure the *sanad* as Munim Khan advised the Emperor to direct the rival claimants to decide among themselves as to who was the real heir to the kingdom of Shivaji so that the *sanad* might be issued in his favour.

Tarabai's opposition did not abate. She was a past master in intrigue and diplomacy. It was therefore difficult to destroy her influence. In the meantime, she was able to rope in the support of Chandrasen Jadhav who had ever been friendly to Tarabai and had never approved of his father siding with Shahu. When Shahu gave him the office of the *Senapati* he wavered in his attitude for a while.

But Shahu did not trust him implicitly either. He therefore, to keep control over him, appointed Balaji Vishwanath as *Senakarte*. Chandrasen did not like Balaji and in 1711 this secret dislike burst out into an open struggle. When Shahu tried to shield Balaji, Chandrasen got dissatisfied and went over to Tarabai where he employed all his strength and energy to undermine the power of Shahu. Shahu now released Parashuram *Pratinidhi* and sent him to Tarabai to explore the avenues of a compromise, and promised to restore him to his post if he succeeded in his assignment. Parashuram was an opponent of Shahu. He too, therefore, went over to Tarabai.

As Tarabai gained more and more power, local *jagirdars* and *deshmukhs* as well as Mughal officers started their attacks on Shahu's forts. This worsened his position. But fortunately for him Ramachandra Pant *Amalya* and some other Maratha leaders got dissatisfied with Tarabai and put her along with son under arrest and raised Shambhuji II the son of Rajasbai on the throne of Kolhapur. Balaji also had a hand in this conspiracy.

But this too did not materially improve the position of Shahu because Shambhuji continued opposition to him. At one time there was a danger of Shahu losing Relations between Shahu and Balaji even Satara. But Balaji Vishwanath succeeded in rehabilitating his power so that it became possible for him to continue a *Chhatrapati*.

There is no definite knowledge about the early life of Balaji Vishwanath. He was a Konkani Brahmin who was noted for his industry, perseverance and keenness of intelligence. He was at first subject to the authority of the Sidis of Janjira but after Shivaji's accession to power he had a natural desire to improve his prospects by associating himself with the progress of his 'Swarajya'. Just then, there was a quarrel between him and the Sidi because Balaji was friendly to Kanhoji Angria. In 1639, he was perhaps employed as a clerk but during the last years of the war of liberation his power seems to have considerably increased because he has been described as the *Sarsuba* of Poona and Daulatabad and the chief revenue collector on behalf of Dhanaji Jadhav. During this period, he seems to have been loyal also to Aurangzeb and probably for this reason he not

only received no punishment but also got an opportunity to come in contact with Shahu. His influence considerably increased when he won over Dhanaji and on the latter's death and his appointment as *Senakarte* he became almost a rival and equal of Chandraśen. In 1713, Shahu's *Peshwa* Bahiro Pant Pingle fell a prisoner in course of fighting against Kanhoji Angria and the latter occupied a number of Shahu's forts and took up the cause of the house of Kolhapur. Nobody dared to accept the responsibility of challenging his authority. Finally, Balaji Vishwanath undertook the responsibility of subjugating him and Shahu appointed him the *Peshwa*. This helped to impart stability to the power of Shahu but it was as a result of this appointment that Peshwaship became hereditary in his family and the *Chhatrapati* was reduced to the status of a mere nominal sovereign and like the Mughal Emperor had to live almost like a prisoner.

Balaji Vishwanath was a poor general but his diplomatic and administrative acumen was of a very high order. As soon as he became the *Peshwa*, he sought an interview

Balaji Vishwanath with Kanhoji Angria and induced him to
(1713-1720) take up the cause of Shahu. He impressed on him that his alignment with the house of Kolhapur will bring him no particular gain but if he could form a *laison* between the army and the navy by joining a generous ruler like Shahu, it would redound to the credit of both the *Chhatrapati* and the *Sarkhel* (head of the navy). He also defined the frontier between the possessions of the *Chhatrapati* and Kanhoji and promised to support the latter against the Sidis of Janjira. The result of this treaty was that the former *Peshwa* was released and Kanhoji came to Satara on the occasion of the Holi in 1715 and offered his homage to Shahu. This raised the credit of Balaji greatly.

He now started distributing most of the higher posts among his friends and followers. Ambaji Pant Purandare was appointed *Mutliq* or the Deputy *Peshwa* while Ramji Pant Bhanu became the *Fadnis*.

The chief aim of Balaji's policy was to consolidate the position of the *Chhatrapati* and to secure the Peshwaship for his family on a hereditary basis. It was only by achieving the first that he could hope to realize the other. Circumstances also contributed to his success. But the greatness of Balaji lies in the fact that he had the capacity to bend adverse circumstances to his benefit. This he achieved more by diplomacy and management than by military force.

When Balaji became the *Peshwa*, Shahu was in a miserable plight indeed. He had neither land nor resources. Only a few forts acknowledged his authority and he lacked the means to pay for the military and the civilian personnel needed to hold them. In

The Position of
Shahu

the area supposed to belong to him agriculture was neglected and the local *Deslmukhs* wanted to pay nothing to the *Chhatrapati*. Not only that, they attacked and plundered the villages belonging to others. This led to great anarchy and lawlessness. The Maratha chiefs claiming to be partisans of the *Chhatrapati*, raised whatever troops they liked and employed them in plundering raids or exacting *Chauth* according to their own sweet will and pocketed all the gains themselves. The *Chhatrapati* had no real control over them. He could not count on their support in his hour of need. In fact they were all engaged in pursuing their own selfish ends behind the cloak of service to the *Chhatrapati*. They could admire his mild temper and religious disposition but they did not consider themselves under any obligation to carry out his wishes. They could not expect any help or protection from the *Chhatrapati*. On the contrary, the *Chhatrapati* depended on them not merely for contingents and contributions but even for his bare physical needs. They were therefore characterised not so much by devotion and humility proper to subordinates, but by arrogance, vanity and selfishness.

Shahu lacked the ability to control or improve this state of affairs. He was kind and generous, soft and sympathetic, religious and moral. But he was lacking in initiative and leadership, patience and diplomacy, perseverance and valour. He could be a good man but not a successful ruler. He could cause no injury to anybody nor forget a favour ever received. Aurangzeb had done no harm to him or to his mother. He had therefore, such an overpowering sense of gratitude towards his dynasty that he considered it a great privilege to be able to render any service to any of his descendants and a sin to strive for independence. With such a *Chhatrapati*, it was impossible to pursue a bold or ambitious policy.

Balaji had allied himself with Dhanaji in order to cover his own military weakness. But Dhanaji did not survive for long and his son, the next *Senapati* was a far inferior person and also he did not remain loyal to Shahu, so that the post was offered to his brother Santaji but when he too did not come up to the expectations, it was offered to Man Singh More in 1712. Man Singh was replaced in 1717 by Khande Rao Dabhade. It is thus obvious that one great weakness of Shahu was that he had no first rate general on his side.

A group of Marathas was in favour of descendants of the Rajaram. They were interested not so much in the welfare of the Maratha nation as in pursuing their own selfish end. They therefore wanted to preserve the separate existence of this rival house which was bound to lead to civil war. One of the worst consequences of this war was a total demoralisation of the Marathas. They became

The House of
Kolhapur

utterly unscrupulous and kept changing sides constantly so that conditions remained fluid and unstable for long years to come. It admirably suited the enemies of the Marathas who could gain their ends by playing one party against the other. It was, to put an end to this state of affairs that Balaji had joined the conspiracy against Tarabai. But as noted earlier this did not in any way improve the relations between the rival Houses.

During Balaji's tenure of office the Viceroys in the Deccan were Nizam-ul-mulk (1713-1715 and 1720-1748), Husain Ali (1715-1718) and Alim Ali (1718-1720). Of these Alim Ali deputised for his uncle Husain Ali. They were all opposed to the extension of Marathas authority and did their best to suppress them. But as the policy of the Emperor was subject to spasmodic changes, the Viceroys did not feel secure and their subordinates did not always obey them with the result that the Marathas did not have to encounter any serious opposition from their side.

There were besides, the kingdoms of Gondwana, Tanjore, Trichinopoly and Mysore. But they were all regarded as tributary to the Mughals. Their internal condition also was not good and they usually fell a prey to their nobles and neighbours.

The Mughal Emperor was still regarded as the legal sovereign of both the north and the south. But his power had declined so rapidly that after 1713, he was no better than a mere figure-head. He was at the mercy of one powerful nobleman or the other and had to dance to his tune, or in the event of failure or opposition to do so lost both his head and his crown. Still his name commanded wide respect and most things were done under his Seal. A post or province seized by force could be legitimised by a *farman* bearing his signature. To that extent, they still had some utility.

If Shahu had secured the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the Deccan provinces as a successor to the rights of Shivaji, he would have gained in prestige and scored a decisive advantage in the civil war. That is why he had been trying for it since the very beginning. He did not probably secure a *sanad* from Azam. But on his departure, Daud Khan who had been left in charge of the Deccan was on the point of recognizing the claims of Shahu when Bahadur Shah suddenly made his appearance in the Deccan and as noted earlier declined to concede the request of Shahu. In 1712, Daud agreed to pay *Chauth* under pressure by the Marathas but on condition that they should not seek to realize it direct from the peasants

but from the Viceroy after he had made the collections himself.

But before this arrangement could be put into operation Nizam-ul-mulk became the Viceroy of the Deccan. He lived in a right royal style and considered it derogatory to his pride to pay any contribution to the Marathas. He therefore evaded payment on the ground that he was unable to ascertain as to who was the *Chhatrapati*. He refused to make any payment to either Shahu or Shambhuji II as long as they did not decide the issue between themselves in the clearest possible manner. At the same time, he used all his intelligence to keep the two parties at war against each another.

His successor Husain Ali endeavored to break the power of the Marathas but failing in the attempt tried to win them over to his side. This change in outlook was the result not only of the strength of the Marathas but also of a shift in Delhi politics. Farrukhsiyar was busy intriguing to destroy the supremacy of the Sayyad Brothers. Many self-seeking *amirs* were also opposed to them. Husain Ali having received a message from his elder brother that their opponents were gradually gaining the upper hand ever since his departure to the Deccan, and that there was even a possibility of the Emperor using force to destroy their power was therefore forced in a hurry to return to the capital. The Sayyad Brothers were the leaders of the Hindustani Party and they also had support of the some Rajput Rajas on their side. Husain Ali, therefore, thought that an understanding with the Marathas would not only restore peace in the south but secure for him their military assistance even in the north. He therefore opened negotiations for peace.

Balaji decided to take full advantage of this. Fortunately for him, Husain Ali's envoy Shankaraji Malhar was at heart a well-wisher of the Marathas. Hence Balaji's diplomatic success he too fully cooperated with Balaji. Shankaraji was an able Brahmin who had once been in the service of Raja Ram. But when there was a misunderstanding between him and Raja Ram, he felt so disgusted that he took political *sanyas* and went away to Benares. Husain Ali had picked him up from there and brought him to the Deccan in order to use him in his contacts with the Marathas. Balaji flattered his vanity and won him over to the side of Shahu.

When Shankaraji went to Satara as a representative of Husain Ali, he tried to negotiate an arrangement which should be favourable to the Marathas and yet help consolidate the power of the Sayyads. He is said to have addressed the Maratha leaders thus:

"Here are the two powerful Sayyads holding out their hand for friendship.... Offer your own terms: they will be

ungrudgingly accepted... Your king is pious and generous at heart. He will not sanction a policy that would do harm to the Emperor. This is an advantage in itself. The Sayyads themselves do not contemplate any harm to the Emperor: they are only anxious to set matters right in the administration which must run smoothly....."

The Maratha leaders accepted his offer and in February 1718 a treaty was made between the two parties according to Terms of the which an assurance was given to secure a Treaty (1718) *sanad* from the Emperor.

The principal terms of the treaty were:

(1) That all territories known as Shivaji's *Swarajya* together with the forts therein should be delivered to Shahu in full possession.

(2) That such territories as had been recently conquered by the Marathas in Khandesh, Berar, Gondwana, Hyderabad and Carnatic as described in the annexure to the treaty, should also be ceded to them as part of the Maratha kingdom;

(3) That the Marathas should be allowed to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from all the six Mughal *subas* in the south. In return for the *Chauth*, the Marathas were to furnish a force of 15,000 troops for the protection of the Emperor and in return for *Sardeshmukhi* they should suppress rebellion and robbery in the said *subas*;

(4) That Shahu should do no harm to Shambhuji of Kolhapur;

(5) That the Marathas should pay to the Emperor an annual tribute of rupees ten lakhs; and

(6) That the Emperor should release and send back from Delhi Yasubai and all other members of Shahu's family with all their followers that were detained there.

Husain Ali accepted the treaty and agreed to its immediate enforcement in anticipation of ratification by the Emperor.

Balaji's trip to the north (1716-1719) The Marathas therefore started levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. In June 1718 Khande Rao Dabhade at the head of 15,000 soldiers reached the camp of the Viceroy and in November 1718, Balaji Vishwanath, Khando Ballal *Chitnis* and a number of Maratha military leaders proceeded towards the north with the Maratha army and reached Delhi in February 1719 while the Sayyad Brothers also secured the support of certain other elements beside the Marathas. With their assistance, Farrukhsiyar was deposed and Rafi-ud-darjat was elevated to the throne in his place. The new monarch issued three *sanads* to the Marathas

and Balaji and his companions returned to the south with them. By one, Shahu was appointed as a vassal prince in charge of the *Swarajya*. By the second he was empowered to levy *Chauth* while by the third he was granted the rights of *Sardeshmukhi*. These *sanads* were issued in implementation of the treaty already agreed to and members of Shahu's family were also released.

This trip proved of immense importance to the Marathas. Shahu's title now acquired a constitutional basis. An opportunity was secured to employ Maratha power in useful constructive activities and the dignity of the *Peshwa* and the *Chhatrapati* was considerably enhanced. It was during his stay at the capital that Balaji made contacts with Ni'am-ul-mulk, Jay Singh and Ajit Singh which proved of great advantage to the Marathas later. Out of the daily allowance of Rs 50,000 per day Balaji made a saving of 30 lakhs which he carried to the Deccan and deposited in the *Chhatrapati's* treasury. This considerably eased his financial difficulties. The Marathas were greatly impressed by the magnificence at the capital and they were fired with an ambition to build up the prosperity of Maharashtra. This too proved beneficial in the long run. Balaji was accompanied by his son Bajirao. The experience that he thus acquired was turned to great advantage for the Maratha empire. He was firmly convinced that the Mughal empire had become so rotten to the core that anybody who had intelligence, strength and courage could seize with impunity as much as he could retain.

After his return from the north, Balaji seized all the territory round about Poona and drove out the imperial agents from there. He made war against the Raja of Kolhapur and inflicted a defeat on him but could not root him out altogether.

Other measures
adopted by Balaji

He raised an army of personal followers of the *Chhatrapati* and employed it in subjugating the *Deshmukhs* situated in the *Swarajya* and suppressed with a high hand all robbers, marauders and disturbers of public peace, hunting them down to their dens and inflicting a heavy punishment on them. He had *Ashtapradhans* and *Pratinidhis* appointed so that the general frame-work of government might be established. He took a number of measures to restore some sort of discipline and a sense of solidarity among the Maratha leaders. But he did not meet with much success in this direction because they had been enjoying such wide freedom since 1689 that they could hardly be induced to submit to authority. If force were to be employed it could lead to a terrible civil war.

Balaji assigned to each Maratha leader some *jagir* in the *Swarajya* so that his connection with Maharashtra and the *Chhatrapati* might not sap altogether. He was at the same time given the right to levy *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from one or more of the Deccan Provinces. In the distribution of these areas Balaji's

policy was not to assign compact areas but to spread them over a number of localities. The advantage in this was that each man would have to act in collaboration with others and would never be able to acquire sufficient strength to be able to defy the central government. He also charged them with the responsibility of maintaining law and order within the areas from which they realized *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. The tax-collectors in the spheres of influence of members of the *Ashta Pradhan* and the the *Peshwa* were appointed by the officials of the finance department and in those of other Maratha leaders, this right was exercised by one of the *Pradhans*. Thus a scheme of checks and balances was devised. Usually Brahmins were appointed as tax-collectors and they were instructed to send an authentic and detailed account of annual collection to the office of the *Chhatrapati*. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, the Brahmin *Peshwas* secured indirect control over the income of all Maratha leaders through the offices of these Brahmin tax-collectors.

In regard to collections it was decided that the revenue from *Sardeshmukhi* should go entirely to the *Chhatrapati*. From other collections, he was to receive only 25% and assign a maximum of 9% to any person. Thus each officer was to receive at least 66% of the total collection from his area. This arrangement proved the progenitor of the future Maratha confederacy and created difficulties for the *Peshwa* and the *Chhatrapati* in times to come. Mutual jealousies among Maratha leaders enabled their enemies to defeat them one by one and to found an empire of their own. But this much must be admitted that in the circumstances then prevailing probably no other arrangement was possible.

Another remarkable feature of the arrangement was that the people who scrupulously observed their obligations in regard to payment to the *Chhatrapati* were few indeed. The usual complaint was that taxes were perpetually in arrears and that even what was collected entailed use of force so that one had to incur an additional cost of maintaining soldiers besides the payment of salaries to normal tax-collectors. When they were short of funds, they had to take loans on interest which had to be repaid. It was therefore contended that payment to the centre according to paper figures was impossible. What was possible was that they should first meet the administration and the army bill and provide for other unavoidable expenses. Then out of the balance, they must set aside something for the maintenance of their own household after which the residue alone could be paid to the *Chhatrapati*. The net result was that his income was small and highly uncertain.

The policy of Balaji has come under fire from certain quarters. While conceding, that as a result of his policy, the

An estimate of the
work of Balaji
Vishwanath

power of the Marathas gained a legal basis in Maharashtra and the prestige of the *Peshwa* and the *Chhatrapati* was enhanced he is said to have been guilty of two grave errors:

(1) Submission to the Mughlas and acceptance of vassalage by signing away independence which was contrary to the ideal of Shivaji.

It may, however, be pointed out in this regard that Shahu himself was unwilling to rise in rebellion against the Emperor, that even if he had the desire, he lacked the means to fight for independence and that on the basis of independence there could be no agreement with the Emperor because Farrukhsiyar was opposed to ratifying even the terms agreed upon by Husain Ali and, after his death, Nizam-ul-mulk, the Viceroy in the Deccan refused to implement them. In such circumstances, independence could be won only by war while in practice acceptance of vassalage implied no real limitation on authority.

(2) If he had secured a promise of payment of a fixed sum of money or the cession of certain Mughal districts in perpetual *jagir* in lieu of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*, the Marathas would have been saved the bother of leading incessant raids which involved a wide dispersal of their power and alienation of the people's sympathies.

But this too has been refuted, on the ground, that it was only because of direct collection of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* that the Maratha sphere of influence went on increasing which ultimately led to the foundation of an extensive empire. Acceptance of a definite sum or a limited territory would not have provided this advantage. Nor would there have been any scope for keeping ambitious Marathas leaders usefully employed. It would thus appear more reasonable to hold that Balaji rendered a great service to his king, country and family and paved the ground for the success of his illustrious son Bajirao.

At the time of Balaji's death, his eldest son Bajirao had not yet attained the age of twenty. He had been born in 1700 and

Bajirao I

(1720-1740)

he held no high office in Shahu's government. But the general policy of Shahu was to keep all influential families satisfied. All offices were therefore tending to become hereditary. According to this principle, Bajirao should have been appointed the *Peshwa*. Nor was he deficient in personal merits. To his prepossessing looks he combined a dignified bearing and a charming personality. He had received first lessons in diplomacy and war under his own father. He was equally at home in the *Shastra* (book-learning) and the *Shastra* (skill in arms). He was an excellent rider and could be seen galloping along seated on his horse's neck, merrily partaking of dry grains filled in his pouch. Like the common run of Maratha soldiers, he would sleep on bare ground

and live on frugal meals without a feeling of least inconvenience. He looked upon war as a thrilling pastime and had the makings of a bold fighter, a clever tactician and an excellent leader. His youth was his only drawback.

According to his usual policy, Shahu placed before his courtiers and members of the *Ashtapradhan* the proposal of offering the Peshwaship to Bajirao. The immediate reaction was violent and hostile because officers senior in age and experience were unwilling to submit to a mere lad. Shahu was in a fix at to what to do. He, however, confessed that he saw no other means of repaying the debt of gratitude that he owed to Balaji for his signal services to the crown. This slightly softened the audience. He now used his trump card and appealed to them to accept the proposal as a concession to his conscience but at the same time gave them a solemn assurance that if Bajirao failed to prove worthy of his father, he would himself replace him by another person. Thus through the grace of his master, Bajirao secured the highest office in Maratha confederacy. He had now to justify his choice by meritorious work.

Bajirao had become the *Peshwa* indeed but knew it would not be as easy to retain that office as any error or indiscretion on his part could be magnified out of

Problems before Bajirao all proportions and his worst opponents would be those who were supposed to be his subordinates. Secondly, the duties of the *Peshwa* were also quite heavy. Besides Nizam-ul-mulk was returning to the south and was known to be a staunch enemy of the Marathas. He had previous knowledge and experience of Deccan politics and was bound to use force and finesse against the Marathas. The Raja of Kolhapur and the disgruntled Maratha leaders could easily be set against the new Peshwa. Bajirao had thus to act in a series of very trying circumstances.

Bajirao's chief aim was the establishment of a '*Hindu pad Padshahi*'. He felt that the Mughal empire had become rotten to the core and the Rajputs could well be set against it by playing upon their religious susceptibilities. The joint front could capture Delhi and put an end to the rule of the *mlechchhas* to establish an all-India Hindu empire. He thus wanted to carry the work initiated by Shivaji to its logical conclusion. The first prerequisite for this was the use of Maratha power in an organised manner. The Viceroy of the Deccan next, was to be so humbled that he should not be able to stand in the way of the Marathas, and finally, the Raja of Kolhapur, was to be made subservient to Shahu.

Bajirao also realized that he must retain the confidence of Shahu. He therefore treated the *Chhatrapati* with studied res-

Relations between Bajirao and Shahu should keep Shahu informed of day-to-day developments and counteract all propaganda intended to alienate his sympathies. This task first entrusted to Ambaji Pant Purandare who held the office of deputy to the *Peshwa* and usually stayed with Shahu. But if Ambaji had to leave station, the task of managing Shahu was assigned to Bajirao's younger brother Chinnaji Appa. Ambaji survived till 1734 and throughout this period, he rendered signal services to Bajirao. When Bajirao's son Balaji Bajirao grew up, he was assigned this delicate task. On the other hand, Shahu too had faith in Bajirao and was anxious to render him all possible assistance. He directed his personal followers to collaborate sincerely with Bajirao. Thus Pilaji Jadhav and Fateh Singh Bhonsle became the supporters of Bajirao. Members of the *Ashta Pradhan* and particularly, the *Senapati* and the *Pratinidhi* were not favourable to him. But Khando Ballal Chitnis and his son and successor Govindrao Chitnis were under the influence of Shahu and consistently supported Bajirao.

Shahu believed that there was nothing that Bajirao could not achieve and no problem that he could not resolve. One example of this is provided by the following incident. When Bajirao's proposal for the invasion of northern India was opposed by the Marathas, he is said to have made the following passionate remarks :

"This is the time when we can earn lasting glory by driving out the enemies of our land. If we direct our blows against the trunk of the pagoda tree, its branches will fall to the ground by themselves. Maratha expansion in Hindustan will carry our victorious banner from the *Krishna* to Attock."

Thereupon Shahu is said to have taken his side and remarked that he was confident he could plant it even on the *Himalayas*. This gives an insight into Shahu's faith in the intelligence and power of his young *Peshwa*.

Bajirao succeeded in attracting round himself a number of capable young men who helped him realize his aims. Chief among them were (1) Fateh Singh Bhonsle, Principal lieutenant of Bajirao, an adopted son of Shahu and of almost the same age as the *Peshwa*, (2) Udaji Pawar who later founded the kingdom of Dhar, (3) Malhar Rao Holkar who was of an obscure origin and began his career as a common soldier but finally rose to be the founder of the kingdom of Indore, (4) Ranoji Sindhia, who was originally a personal attendant of Shahu and is said to have been the slipper-bearer of the *Chhatrapati* and (5) Chinnaji Appa, his own younger

brother who loyally supported his elder brother throughout his career.

Nizam-ul-mulk was hostile to the Marathas from the very beginning because he aspired to establish an independent kingdom of his own. That is why Shahu's relations with Nizam-ul-mulk he disregarded the *sanads* entitling Shahu to realize *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. The alleged ground for refusing payment was the conflicting claims of Shambhuji and Shahu to be exclusive descendants of Shivaji. But the real reason was, that he did not consider himself or other nobles of the Emperor to be under any obligation to respect the *sanads* issued by the Sayyads because the latter were not the servants but the enemies and the murderers of the Emperor. But circumstances forced him to agree and to honour the *sanads* at the time of his first interview with Bajirao I. In order to evade the consequence of this acceptance, he had instigated Shambhuji to claim the privileges of the *Chhatrapati* for himself. The Marathas were not unaccustomed to his duplicity. Shahu, was therefore, obliged to send his *Sar-Lashkar* at the head of an army while the Nizam-ul-mulk sent the supporters of the house of Kolhapur to oppose it. But Shahu emerged victorious. Bajirao now sought to settle the terms of agreement by a personal interview with the Nizam-ul-mulk but the Nizam did not categorically recognize the rights accruing to Shahu from the *sanads* of 1719. A little later, Nizam went to Delhi in 1721 but returned once again in 1724, disgusted with the conditions obtaining there.

He had in the meantime secured for himself the provinces of Malwa and Gujerat also, and thought that it should now be easier for him to crush the power of the Marathas. But the Emperor was offended with him and declaring him a rebel appointed the deputy-Viceroy Mubariz Khan as his successor. Shahu too desired to form a strong coalition against Nizam-ul-mulk and destroy his power for good and luckily for the Marathas, Mubariz solicited their help just in this contingency. But the Marathas proposed such impossible terms that they could not be accepted. The terms were.

(1) Imperial *sanads* regarding *Chauth*, *Sardeshmukhi* and the *Swarajya* should be honoured,

(2) They should have the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from Malwa as well as Gujerat,

(3) All lands in the possession of the Emperor formerly belonging to *Swarajya* should be restored to them,

(4) The Viceroy of the Deccan should be appointed in consultation with Shahu,

(5) The Governorship of Hyderabad should be assigned to Fateh Singh Bhonsle,

(6) Shambhuji should not be given any help, and

(7) Shahu should be excepted from the payment of annual tribute.

Mubariz Khan did not accept these terms and instead negotiated an alliance with the Nawab of Carnatic, but the Nizam defeated the allied army and Mubariz Khan was killed in course of fighting. It is held by certain authors that it was in obedience to the wishes of Shahu that Bajirao maintained an attitude of neutrality during this war. But according to Dighe and Sardesai he assisted the Nizam in defiance of the wishes of Shahu. Dr. Dighe has passed strong strictures against such conduct and says that considering the ability, ambition and past conduct of the Nizam-ul-mulk such a policy was most unwise and injurious. He has also adduced evidence in support of the view that Bajirao actually opposed Mubariz Khan. This strange behaviour was due to Bajirao's personal malice against Mubariz Khan and Nizam-ul-mulk's feigned humility and coaxing persuasion. But this is certain that Nizam-ul-mulk's victory added to the troubles of the Marathas.

The immediate gain of the Marathas was that the Nizam acknowledged Maratha claims for levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the Deccan and a promise to secure extension of this right to Malwa and Gujerat.

For three years after this the Nizam-ul-mulk was, to all appearances, on good terms with the Marathas and formed a joint plan for the conquest of the Carnatic. But his real object was to keep the Marathas occupied elsewhere. Consequently, these wars brought no gains to the Marathas although they entailed considerable losses in men and money. For the time being, the Marathas secured the submission of the Nawab of Arcot, the Raja of Tanjore, the Polygars and the Ghorpades of Gutti. But for achieving any permanent results greater efforts had to be made.

In the meantime, the Nizam transferred his headquarters from Aurangabad to Hyderabad and there started secret preparations for a war against the Marathas. In 1726, he won over the *Pratinidhi* to his side by assigning him a *jagir* in Berar and through him persuaded Shahu to accept the Nizam's *jagir* in Balaghat in lieu of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* due from Hyderabad. In 1727, he won over Shambhuji and while Bajirao was proceeding to Carnatic, he sent a message to Shahu that he should accept his mediation in his dispute with Shambhuji and without waiting for his refusal launched an immediate offensive. Just at this time Kanhoji Bhonsle and Sultanji Nimbalkar *Sar-Lashkar* also joined the Nizam.

Shahu sent urgent summons to Bajirao to return home immediately. He went in pursuit of the Nizam but soon realized that as long as the enemy had his artillery intact he could not be defeated. The *Peshwa* acted with great sagacity and patience, he

Victory at
Palkhed

advised Shahu and Chimnaji to proceed to Purandar while he himself led an offensive against Khandesh and made for Burhanpur. The Nizam thought that he was running away and therefore, gave him a hot pursuit thoroughly convinced that in the event of his defeat none else would be able to save Shahu from ruin. The scouts of Bajirao rendered a signal service at this moment. They kept him constantly informed of the movements of the Nizam and conveyed to the subordinate Maratha leaders prompt instructions for the dispositions they must make accordingly. The Nizam on his part failed to surmise his true intentions, he therefore left his artillery behind in order to keep up the tempo of the pursuit. The result was that he was completely trapped and suffered severe losses in the battle of Palkhed 20 miles west of Daulatabad. Although the Marathas did not secure a complete success, the Nizam was so unnerved by what they had achieved that he sued for peace and the treaty of Mungi Shivgaon soon followed in March 1728. According to this treaty he recognized Shahu's claim to levy *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the six *subas* of the Deccan and promised not to lend aid to Shambhuji. This was a personal triumph for Bajirao and he could well be proud of it because by a single powerful stroke he had destroyed the anti-Shahu axis and placed the position of his master on a sound footing.

In 1730-1731, Shambhuji was defeated and he acknowledged the supremacy of Shahu and promised to have no truck with the enemies of the Marathas. This vindicated the constitutional supremacy of Shahu and none of his enemies was in a position to stir up any trouble for the moment.

Shahu's policy towards the Nizam-ul-mulk had been coloured by his apprehensions against Shambhuji. As long as he had not come to any understanding with the latter, Relations with Shambhuji he had opposed taking any strong line against the former. He had been insistent in 1721,

1724, 1725 and 1728 that nothing should be done that might displease the Nizam-ul-mulk. That is why Bajirao had no opportunity to make an open war against him. Maratha historians are sharply divided in their views about the basis of relations with the Nizam-ul-mulk during this period. Some ascribe Maratha softness towards the Nizam-ul-mulk to the mildness of Shahu while others lay the whole blame on Bajirao. Sardesai holds Shahu responsible. Various reasons led Shahu to adopt such an attitude. His religious temperament would not let him forget the debt of gratitude towards all benefactors and he could not lose sight of the fact that Nizam-ul-mulk had also lent his aid to Balaji while the latter was at Delhi. Secondly, he was by nature timid and did not want to do anything that might in the least endanger his position. He feared to contemplate the consequences of Bajirao's defeat against the Nizam. Then finally,

the presence of Shambhuji as a rival was his constant headache. He remembered how recognition of his rights had been evaded time and again by bolstering up pretended rights of Shambhuji. He was aware of the strength of the Nizam-ul-mulk and had a correct measure of his gifts as a resourceful diplomat. His constant fear was that he might openly take up the cause of Shambhuji and initiate a war on his behalf.

Shahu, in his heart of hearts, desired peaceful settlement with Shambhuji. That is why he was averse to initiating any war against him. But there were many self-seeking Maratha leaders who threw themselves into the arms of Shambhuji as soon as they had any cause for grievance against Shahu or his *Peshwa* and left no stone unturned to provoke Shambhuji to war against Shahu. It was difficult to come to any understanding because of the evil influence of such persons. In 1725, Shahu addressed a letter to Shambhuji proposing that they should demarcate their respective spheres of influence and should act in unison. He desired that Shambhuji should try to subjugate the region south of the *Krishna* while he himself would do the same north of it. They should voluntarily assign a part of their conquests to each other and should collaborate in realizing the aims of Shivaji. But Shambhuji did not grasp the hand of friendship thus extended to him and when Bajirao invaded the Carnatic, Shambhuji became apprehensive of his own security. That is why he was driven to develop intimacy with the Nizam and to plan the deposition of Shahu with his assistance. The Nizam's attack on Poona in 1727 was the outcome of this secret pact. Bajirao had forced him to acknowledge the rights of Shahu after his victory against Nizam-ul-mulk at Palkhed. Shahu had desired nothing better. Hence instead of trying to weaken Nizam-ul-mulk still further an attempt was made to neutralise opposition by Shambhuji. It was in pursuance of this policy that in 1730 Shambhuji was defeated and captured and was forced to acknowledge Shahu's supremacy in 1731. Then alone did Shahu's position as as the *Chhatrapati* become unchallenged and the Nizam and other powers of the Deccan had no chance of repudiating his authority.

Bajirao had always nursed the ambition of leading an invasion into northern India with a view of exploiting the weakness of the Emperor in the interest of Maratha expansion north of the *Vindhyas*. He had noticed that Shripat Rao *Pratinidhi*, Fateh Singh Bhonsle and Shahu himself were unduly cautious and were so obsessed with the might of the Viceroy of the Deccan that they could never agree to make a determined war against him. These divided counsels at home formed the first hurdle in securing any notable success in the Deccan. The second hurdle was the peculiar position of Deccan politics which always conspired to

Bajirao decides to
invade the north

threaten the position of Shahu by an understanding between the Niv'am and the Raja of Kolhapur. The incidents of 1725 to 1728 bear ample testimony to this. Thirdly there was no new privilege to be secured in the Deccan because by the *sanads* of 1719 the Marathas had already acquired the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from all the six *subas* of the Deccan. It now remained only to enforce these rights in a thoroughgoing manner. It was, therefore only in the north that there was any scope for pursuing an ambitious policy. There were many brave and zealous leaders among the Marathas. If they were all huddled in the south they might engage in jealousy, intrigue and treason. If their eyes were turned towards the north, they would not only extend Maratha sphere of influence but would also be saved from mutual dissensions and recriminations. Malwa and Gujerat bordered on the Deccan and were counted among the most prosperous Provinces of the Empire. Hence raids into these provinces could be very profitable and relieve the financial strain from which the Maratha state continually suffered during these days. The debts of Shahu and the *Peshwa* had been constantly piling up and had to be repaid in order to maintain their credit. Thus the motives of invading the north were financial, political and military. Bajirao added a religious motive as well when he represented that it was with a view to establish a Hindu empire that he proposed to seize the provinces held by the *mlechchhas* (the unclean infidels). But this contained only a grain of truth because the Hindu Rajas of Malwa and Rajputana did not collaborate with the Marathas on grounds of religious solidarity but only to secure their individual selfish interests.

The internal condition of Malwa at this time was not quite satisfactory. It had numerous petty *jagirdars*, *samants*, Rajas and Zamindars. Chief among these were Kota, Bundi, Dungarpur, Banswara, Panna, Sitamau, Jhabua, Amjhera etc. They were engaged in mutual wars and leaned on the support of a Rajput Raja or a Mughal nobleman for the protection and extension of their rights. The difficulties of imperial governors increased manifold because of the existence of these feudatories. Raja Jay Singh of Amber desired to bring under his sway the whole tract of land from Agra and Mathura to the banks of the *Narbada*. He was, therefore, interested in seeing that none of the governors of Malwa should be successful so that the Emperor and his *Wazir* might be obliged to assign the province of Malwa to him. He therefore desired the Marathas to invade Malwa and the local Hindu chiefs to collaborate with them against the imperial governor. This facilitated the task of the Marathas since Bajirao and Jay Singh were in secret correspondence and the latter kept the Marathas constantly informed about the plans and motives of the Emperor and the Nizam. And the levying of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from Malwa seemed to present no difficulty at all.

Condition of
Malwa

Bajirao decided to do this only with the approval of Shahu. But the court raised a violent opposition. The *Pratinidhi* gave the first priority to suppression of the power of the Nizam and the Raja of Kolhapur and internal cohesion of the Marathas. He regarded it the height of folly to think of invading the north with such powerful enemies in the rear. But after a prolonged discussion, the plan of invading Malwa was finally approved. In the initial stages, Bajirao entrusted this task to Udaji Pawar, Malhar Rao Holkar, Kanthaji Kadambande, Ranoji Sindhia and Ambaji Pant. They levied occasional tribute and established contacts with the local people.

But the attitude of the Nizam, the wars in the Carnatic and internal dissensions gave Bajirao no scope for leading a full-fledged offensive against Malwa. Notwithstanding that, Udaji Pawar and Malhar Rao Holkar as representatives of the Peshwa had secured footholds in Malwa and were ever busy extending their sphere of influence. The Peshwa periodically deputed trustworthy officers to examine their accounts. All this, however, was only of a preliminary character. His success at Palkhed brought him into the limelight both in the north and the south. Just then financial difficulties became unusually acute. Jay Singh advised an immediate invasion of Malwa. The Peshwa therefore directed his brother Chimnaji Appa assisted by experienced generals like Udaji, Malhar Rao, Ranoji and others to march into Malwa. The Governor of Malwa at this time was Girdhar Bahadur. He was trying to infuse vigour in the provincial administration and was realizing government dues with great strictness. This procured to the Marathas local support against him. The rival forces came face to face in the hilly tracts of Amjhera near Dhar and Chimnaji's efficient leadership secured for the Marathas a complete victory while both Girdhar Bahadur and his cousin Dayaram Bahadur were killed. This added fresh laurels to the glory of the Peshwa, while the Emperor, greatly upset by this disquieting news began to devise plans for the expulsion of the Marathas from Malwa.

But before the Emperor could stabilise his position in Malwa Bajirao entered Bundelkhand and fighting on behalf of Chhatrasal inflicted a defeat on Muhammad Khan Bangash who gave a solemn assurance never to set foot on Bundelkhand again. In return for this service, the Peshwa received from Chhatrasal a large *jagir* including Kalpi, Konch, Jhansi, Saugor etc. Just then he presented to the Peshwa an extremely beautiful Muslim concubine named Mastani who later bore him a son named Shamsher Bahadur. Bajirao assigned to him a part

of his *jagir* in Bundelkhand. It was under the influence of this lady that Bajirao learnt the use of meat and wine.

It was in such circumstances that Jay Singh secured the governorship of Malwa. He recovered Mandu from the Marathas but came to terms with them on condition of paying them eleven lakhs of rupees annually in lieu of *Chauth*. The credit for this arrangement goes principally to Jay Singh's envoy Dip Singh who on acquainting himself with conditions obtaining at Satara, Poona and Hyderabad recommended such a course of action. But before this treaty could be ratified Jay Singh was replaced by Muhammad Khan Bangash who tried to throw out the Marathas by force but failed in the attempt.

Meanwhile, the Peshwa was receiving fresh accession of strength. Shahu assigned him and his brother Chimnaji the right of realizing *Chauth* from Malwa and the Peshwa appointed faithful servants to do this on his behalf while the local governors failed to secure any success against him upto 1736.

There existed a pro-Maratha group at the imperial capital while those that were hostile to them had neither money nor enjoyed the confidence of the Emperor who suspected them of plotting to dethrone him. Besides, the Maratha leaders were extremely bold and capable so that the Emperor was forced to accept Bajirao's terms in 1736 viz. (1) that the *Peshwa* should be granted the governorship of Malwa, (2) that he should be paid 13 lakhs of rupees to cover his expenses and (3) that the demand for six lakhs of rupees payable by the *Chhatrapati* to the Emperor in return for the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the *subas* of the Deccan should be waived till the *Chhatrapati* acquired real control over them. The Marathas thus acquired virtually the whole of Malwa and the prestige of the *Peshwa* was considerably enhanced. Subordinate principalities under the Holkars, the Sindhias and the Pawars now grew from strength to strength. Also, at about this time, the Emperor conferred on Bajirao and Chimnaji *mansabs* of 7000 and 5000 respectively.

Alarmed by the rising power of the Marathas, the Emperor summoned the Nizam to the north and he tried to drive out the Marathas by securing the governorship of Malwa for his own son. But Bajirao inflicted another defeat on him in December 1737 near Bhopal by repeating the tactics followed at Palkhed, and forced him to accept his terms. The *Peshwa* was to receive the whole of Malwa, the land between the *Narbada* and the *Chambal* was to be ceded to him in full sovereignty and he was to be paid a war indemnity of 50 lakhs

The Battle of
Bhopal (Dec. 1737)

of rupees. The Nizam also pledged to secure ratification of these terms by the Emperor. Henceforward the *Peshwa* acquired full authority over Malwa although an invasion by Nadir Shah held up the formal grant of a *farman* to the Marathas till 1741 when Bajirao was already dead being succeeded by his son Balaji Bajirao in the office of the *Peshwa*.

Bajirao asserted his superior might in 1737 by leading an invasion against the imperial capital itself. Saadat Khan, the governor of Awadh had boasted of having driven away the Marathas because he had succeeded in inflicting a defeat on a certain Maratha band. On hearing of his boast, Bajirao crossed the *Jumna* and subjected Awadh to plunder and rapine and ended by marching up to Delhi and setting fire to it. The army sent against him was routed and the Emperor was badly upset. But Bajirao had the good sense to realize that it was still premature to think of occupying the imperial capital. He therefore, marched away towards the Deccan before the day had dawned.

During this period Chimnaji followed by his elder brother invaded Rajputana and subjected it to *Chauth*. He had once requested the Emperor to grant all the holy places of the Hindus in *jagir* to him. But although the request was not granted, no imperial agent dared interfere when the *Peshwa's* mother took a round of them in a holy pilgrimage.

While Bajirao was consolidating his hold over Malwa, Khanderao Dabhade tried to levy *Chauth* from Gujerat. Pilaji Gaikwar and Kanthaji Kadambande acted as his deputies and in course of time brought the whole of Gujerat under the sway of the Marathas. Dabhade had secured the right of levying *Chauth* from Gujerat from Shahu. In 1719 Balaji Vishwanath had tried to secure an imperial *sanad* for realizing *Chauth* from Gujerat also but his request had not been granted. The Marathas had, therefore been raiding Gujerat ever since the days of Shivaji. Khanderao had paid special attention to extending his power in Gujerat and his efforts had been crowned with success. In 1725, the Governor of Gujerat came to terms with the Marathas and conceded them the right of levying *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. Khanderao's advancing age forced him to relax his hold over his erstwhile deputies. Consequently Kadambande acquired pre-eminence in the region north of Mahe while Pilaji dominated the lands south of it. In 1727, Bajirao sent an army into Gujerat and secured the right of realizing *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* by an arrangement with the local governor. He proposed to Dabhade that they should both partition Malwa and Gujerat between them. But the latter would not concur with it. The *Peshwa* intervened once again in 1729 which offended Dabhade's lieutenants so much that they allied themselves with the Nizam to destroy

the supremacy of the *Peshwa* completely. Khanderao died in September 1729 and was succeeded as *Senapati* by his own son Trimbakrao in January 1733. He got so jealous of the *Peshwa* that he went to the length of saying in one of his letters that he would soon kill Bajirao to relieve the *Chhatrapati* of his pernicious influence. The *Peshwa* was informed of this by his spies. He therefore sent an army into Gujerat without consulting Shahu. Trimbakrao and his supporters were defeated and the *Senapati* was killed. Henceforward, the *Peshwa* had a hand in the affairs of Gujerat as well, but instead of seeking to drive out the Gaikwar he made him a follower of his own. Abhay Singh Rathor, the then governor of Gujerat succeeded in securing the murder of Pilaji in 1732 but this did not affect the power of the Marathas. Their power in Gujerat tended to increase in direct proportion to the consolidation of their power in Malwa. Damaji, the son and successor of Pilaji acquired more and more power with lapse of time while the *Peshwa's* victory over Dabhade and the expulsion of Kanthaji from Northern Gujerat in 1735 left the Gaikwars without any rivals and they freely extended their authority in all directions. The weak governors were at last driven to accept terms dictated by the Gaikwar and in 1737 agreed to deliver to the Gaikwar half the total revenue of the province. The power of the governors rapidly declined and Gujerat soon became a part of the Maratha empire. In 1741 Balaji Bajirao had asked for the governorship of Gujerat but the Emperor did not agree to his request. In 1751, the *Peshwa* and the Gaikwar divided Gujerat between them and the authority of the Emperor totally disappeared when in 1753 Ahmadabad was occupied by the Marathas.

A serious handicap of the Marathas was the lack of a powerful navy. Shivaji had made some efforts to make this good and the Angrias were appointed commanders of the Maratha navy. By the time of the accession of Shahu, Kanhoji Angria had become so powerful that he lived like an independent prince and subjected everybody who passed through his sphere of influence to pay a toll. He had even tried conclusions with foreign navies. As a result of the mediation by Balaji Vishwanath, he went to the court of Shahu and accepted him as the *Chhatrapati*. But he never acknowledged the superiority of the *Peshwa*. This continued even upto the time of Bajirao I. It was only towards the close of his life when the Angrias were torn by family feuds, Manaji adopted an attitude of respect for the *Peshwa*. Thus the Angria sphere of influence was more or less like an independent but friendly Maratha power. In course of time, their power declined and the European traders allied themselves with the *Peshwa* to destroy their power and thus caused a grievous loss to the Maratha confederacy.

Another naval power on the Konkan sea-coast was that of the Sidis of Janjira. They were nominally subordinate to the Timurids but in practice they acted like independent chiefs. There was no direct cause for conflict between the Marathas and the Sidis. But soon such causes cropped up. Shahu wanted that Raygarh, the old Maratha capital should be taken back from them. A certain Brahmendra Swami commanded great influence among the Marathas at this period and both Shahu and Bajirao were among his disciples. In 1727, a subordinate of the Sidis destroyed a temple built by this Swami and since then the latter had been nursing a grudge against them. The Sidis and the Angrias also often collided against one another. Hence in 1733 a war against the Sidis was started and Raygarh was captured but the Marathas failed to capture Janjira or to destroy their power completely. Chimnaji gave the Sidis a battle in which the latter was defeated and killed. Finally in 1736, a treaty was made by which half the parganas belonging to the Sidis along with the port of Roha were ceded to the Marathas and they became something like a vassal of the Marathas. The failure to capture Janjira revealed wherein the Maratha weakness lay but later Maratha leaders failed to make good the deficiency.

The same thing is borne out by the Peshwa's war against the Portuguese. The struggle against the Portuguese proved protracted. In March 1737 the Marathas decided to conquer Salsette and it was in 1739, when they were able to occupy the fort of Bassein that the fighting came to an end. The Marathas dared not even attempt the conquest of Daman, Diu, Chaul and Goa for that reason. They had reached the tether of their power in occupying Salsette and Bassein alone. When peace was concluded, they obtained from the Portuguese their northern possessions including four important forts and about 340 villages bearing an annual revenue of $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. Besides these, they secured Bassein, 8 other towns, twenty forts and the island of Salsette. They also obtained some ammunition but it was of a poor quality.

He was still in his fortieth year when Bajirao was suddenly taken ill and died. His premature death came as a great blow to the newly founded Maratha empire because his successor as we shall see in the following pages lacked the ability to keep the Marathas under control.

Death of Bajirao
(1740) An estimate
of his work

No man after Shivaji did so much for the expansion and consolidation of Maratha power as Bajirao I. He combined the virtues of a warrior, statesman and ruler in an admirable measure and he was popularly known as the 'Fighting Peshwa'. He established permanent control of the Marathas over Malwa, Gujerat and Bundelkhand, made a dash to Rajputana and Delhi,

inflicted crushing defeats on the Nizam-ul-mulk and counteracting all his evil designs provided a solid foundation to the power and position of Shahu both in the north and the south. His achievements added more to his own prestige than even to his masters. He far outstripped the *Senapati*, the *Pratinidhi* and the *Sumant* in respect of *jagir*, revenues and personal power and his family acquired pre-eminence among the Marathas. But he cannot be put in the same rank as Shivaji. He made no improvement in the internal cohesion of the Marathas and the defects coming in the wake of the war of liberation which his father had tried to remove were left by him untouched. During his tenure of office, the power of the *Chhatrapati* made no real gain, internal jealousies and dissensions did not abate, the evils of feudalism persisted as ever and the finances of the Maratha state never became perfectly sound. His conduct and character was on the whole esteemable but after his association with Mastani, a decline set in and his dignity was so far compromised that the Brahmin priests refused to conduct the religious ceremonies at the marriage and the *Tajnapavit* (investiture with the sacred thread) of his sons if he were present on the occasion. Yet it must be conceded that his merits far outweighed his defects and he laid the foundation of future Maratha greatness. His servants founded new principalities in Malwa, Bundelkhand, Konkan and Gujerat and they later acquired such power and resources that at one time they extended the sway of the Marathas over practically the whole of India. If Bajirao could have accustomed them to act in obedience to a strong central government, he would have attained to a much higher place not only in the history of the Marathas but even in that of India as a whole and in that case the history of modern India would have followed an altogether different course.

When Bajirao died, his eldest son Balaji, also known as Nana Sahab, had not reached the age of nineteen. But Shahu treated all posts as hereditary and as far as possible he usually preferred to appoint the legal heir of a deceased official. By this practice he strengthened the roots of a hereditary military aristocracy. Thus the successions of Balaji Bajirao to the post of the *Peshwa* was a settled fact. Even then the enemies of the deceased *Peshwa* endeavoured to have changed the decision of Shahu. Raghuji Bhonsle proposed the name of Babuji Nayak Joshi. But Shahu regarded it as height of ingratitude to overlook the claims of the family of the last two *Peshwas* and on June 35, 1740 he unhesitatingly offered the *Peshwaship* to Balaji Bajirao. Though still within his teens, Balaji was not without experience of war and government and was greatly influenced by the personality of his uncle Chimnaji. But unfortunately for him Chimnaji also died only six

Balaji Bajirao
(1740-1761)

months later in January 1741. This came as a great blow to the power of Balajirao.

Another blow came when Shahu died in December 15, 1749. During his reign of 40 years, Shahu had never led a military campaign except once. He never tried to de-

Palaji's relations
with the
Chhatrapati

viate from the beaten track of approved tradition. He was so obsessed with gratitude to Aurangzeb that he shuddered at the prospect of doing any harm to his successors directly or indirectly and his religious temper inspired in him a childish fear of retribution on Judgement day. He wished to please everybody and where this was impossible, he found it extremely difficult to come to any decision. But in spite of all this he was no mere puppet like the imperial faineants at Delhi. With his headquarters at Satara, he kept an eye over all the Maratha chiefs, sent them necessary directions and tried to keep them under some sort of control. In coming to a decision, he had due regard for his dignity and kept everyone so satisfied with his conduct and behaviour that even the most powerful grandees did not disregard his wishes. Besides the deputies of the principal ministers he had by his side his personal staff as well. These latter had such wide experience of government, diplomacy and finance that with their loyal support he could and did effectively intervene in all important affairs. But after his death, it became a more difficult task to keep the Maratha chiefs together.

When Shahu's end drew near, he became anxious about his successor as none of his queens had borne him a son. Balajirao proposed that Shambhuji the Raja of Kolhapur be nominated the successor so that the civil war among the Marathas might be ended and the services of an experienced *Chhatrapati* might be secured. But Shahu was dissatisfied with Shambhuji. Besides, the latter too was an old man and had no sons. Hence it became necessary to look for some suitable young man. Tarabai now suggested the name of Ramaraja who according to her version was a posthumous son of Shivaji II. Many people had no faith in this because she had never before spoken of the existence of such a person. But Shahu ordered investigations to be made and when he was convinced of the truth of Tarabai's statement he agreed to nominate him as his successor but he did not definitely mention his name in the will that he left behind.

Notwithstanding this omission Ramaraja was accepted as Shahu's successor and Tarabai furnished unimpeachable proof of his being her true grandson by sharing with him a common plate at dinner. He was, therefore, formally crowned on January 4, 1750 and all the Maratha leaders offered him their homage and presents. But Ramaraja was utterly devoid of talents. Tarabai desired to keep him strictly under her influence and ruling on his

behalf wanted to break the hegemony of the *Peshwa*. Ramaraja was so disgusted with her behaviour and family wrangles soon started. *Peshwa* and Raghuji Bhonsle wished that the *Chhatrapati* should pick up the business of state as quickly as possible and should so conduct himself as may win him respect of the Marathas. But Tarabai rendered all this impossible. She tried to put him into prison and when she failed to keep him under her control she finally declared that he was no son of Shivaji II. This not only compromised the dignity of Ramaraja but provoked serious discontent even among the families that had been drawn into closer ties with him by marriage or inter-dining. For a time, the *Peshwa* did not know what to do. But soon he found a way out. His cousin Sadashivarao Bhau and his counsellor Ramachandra Baba rendered him great help in this contingency.

For the last three generations, a Chitpawan Bhat Brahmin family had been holding the office of the *Peshwa*. During this period, its political and military pre-eminence over other Maratha chiefs had been indubitably established. Among the central ministers only the *Pratinidhi*, *Senapati* and *Sumant* still retained some importance but they had become relatively weak even in the time of Bajirao I. Shahu had advised his successor to retain the present incumbent in the office of the *Peshwa*. This left the position of the *Peshwa* unaffected. During the wrangles between Tarabai and Ramaraja he acted with great restraint. As he had written in one of his letters, he could, if he liked, throw Tarabai into prison and smash the power of her fellow-conspirators. But he wanted to avoid such a course for he did not wish to provide an opportunity to the enemies of the Marathas to take advantage of their domestic quarrels. Nor did he want to show any disrespect to a talented and renowned lady of the royal family. As far as possible, he preferred to conduct himself as the servant and not as the master of the *Chhatrapati*. But Tarabai rendered this task impossible.

He now thought of a different device. He held a conference at Poona to which were invited Tarabai, Ramaraja and all important Maratha leaders. Besides Tarabai, it was attended by Raghuji Bhonsle, Sindhia, Holkar, Sadashivarao Bhau, Ramachandra Baba, Sakharam Bapu and a few others. The conference remained in session for a number of weeks when the *Peshwa* finally announced that all the offices of the central government should be moved from Satara to Poona but Ramaraja and Tarabai should continue to stay at Satara. He also announced that the interests of the Maratha government demanded that the supreme executive direction should vest in a single person. The *Chhatrapati* had proved unequal to the task. He

would therefore himself assume the responsibility and would not allow the *Sumanta*, the *Pratinidhi* or anybody else to defy this arrangement. It was in accordance with this policy that he deprived the *Sumanta* of Singharh and the *Pratinidhi* of Sangola and threatened them with imprisonment and dismissal in the event of opposition. Yeshwantrao Dabhade was unfit for the office of the *Senapati*. He was, therefore, pensioned off and a *jagir* was assigned for his maintenance. Gaikwar was found to be openly defying the authority of the *Peshwa*. He was, therefore, deprived of half of Gujerat which was annexed to the *Peshwa's* personal domain. Similarly, to disarm the opposition of Babuji Nayak Joshi, he was deprived of the Carnatic and the *Peshwa* took it under his own control. Tarabai was bitterly hostile to all this and continued to conspire against him but in 1752, she too was constrained to swear in the name of God that she would remain at peace in future.

During the regime of Balaji Bajirao, the power of the Marathas expanded in all directions till there came a time when their rising power caused consternation throughout the length and breadth of India. This was the result of the combined efforts of Maratha leaders. But they did not all sincerely recognize the pre-eminence of the *Peshwa*. Hence this rapid expansion did not prove as beneficial as it should have been otherwise. Not only this, the Marathas were guilty of acts which added to the number of their enemies and brought about their defeat in the third battle of Panipat. We may now briefly review the principal events of this period and see how Maratha expansion led to progressive deterioration in the status and power of the Mughal Emperor till it reached almost a vanishing point.

One of the principal rivals of Balajirao was Raghuji Bhonsle who had greatly extended the power of the Bhonslas of Nagpur.

Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (1741-1751) He occupied Trichinopoly in 1741, killed the local governor Dost Ali and made Chanda Sahab a prisoner. While he was engaged in

this war, he received an invitation from Mir Habib for the invasion of Orissa and Bengal. Mir Habib was dissatisfied with Nawab Alivardi Khan, the Governor of Bengal because he had treacherously deprived the descendants of Murshid Quli Khan of their authority over Bengal in 1740 and had secured a *farman* in his favour by offering to the Emperor two crores of rupees. Since 1738, Shahu had declared the eastern provinces to fall within the sphere of influence of Raghuji. The latter therefore, lost no time in sending an army under Bhaskar Rama who dashed on to Burdwan but Raghuji failed to secure any immediate or permanent gain. He, however, persisted in his raids. Alarmed by this rapid rise in the power of Raghuji, Balajirao entered into a treaty against him with Alivardi Khan

in 1743 and secured from him 22 lakhs of rupees for himself and the promise of *Chauth* of the *Chhatrapati*. But Shahu did not approve of this proposal and he clearly demarcated the respective spheres of influence of Balajirao and Raghuji and obliged them to sign and abide by this agreement on oath. Hence from 1744 to 1751, Bhonsle continued to lead his raids into Bengal which finally obliged Alivardi Khan to come to terms with him. He ceded to the Bhonsle Orissan territory upto Cuttack and agreed to pay him 12 lakh rupees a year in lieu of *Chauth* from Bihar and Bengal.

Jay Singh and Khan Dauran had proposed to Muhammad Shah that he should appoint Bajirao as the Regent of the Empire and should entrust to him the duty of maintaining law and order and suppression of rebellions. They thought that this would lead to peace and security within the country. But Saadat Khan and Nizam-ul-mulk had opposed this move. On the death of Bajirao, this hostile group had even expressed the hope of smashing the power of the Marathas. But, as Chimnaji Appa had written to his agent at Delhi, the Marathas had sufficient power even after the death of Bajirao to deal effectively with their enemies. Chief among them, was undoubtedly, the Nizam.

He was the Viceroy of the whole of the Deccan and since 1724 had been trying to assume *de facto* sovereignty in that region. He hated the idea of paying a tribute to the Marathas and this was the root cause of his constant opposition to the them. The Marathas desired to place the whole of India under levy while from the Deccan they had been exacting it since the days of Shivaji, and a *sanad* from the Emperor had converted this right into a constitutional privilege. The Marathas also asserted their claims over the Carnatic because Shahji and Shivaji, Raja Ram and the Ghorpades had established Maratha power there. But the Nizam regarded himself as the overlord of Carnatic and looked upon any extension of Maratha authority in Carnatic as an infringement of his privileges.

The Nawab of Carnatic was definitely his subordinate. Raghuji Bhonsle had made war against him in alliance with Raja Pratap Singh of Tanjore and Dost Ali had been killed. Chanda Sahab, his son-in-law had been carried a prisoner to Satara and detained there for a number of years. The *Peshwas* had also occasionally intervened. This was another cause of grievance.

But the quarrel between the *Peshwa* and the Nizam assumed more dangerous proportions only after 1750. Nasir Jang, the successor of Nizam-ul-mulk died the same year and his daughter's son Muzaffar Jang became the Nizam with French assistance. But he too died soon after and was succeeded by Salabat Jang.

The *Peshwa* invited the eldest son of Asafjah from Delhi to claim his patrimony and launched an invasion against the Nizam to take advantage of this position. A number of engagements were fought upto 1752, the advantage sometimes leaning on the side of the Marathas and at others on the side of Bussy, the French agent at the court of the Nizam. But gradually the Marathas became so powerful that Bussy was forced to come to terms with them in 1752 and to cede to the Marathas all lands between the *Tapti* and the *Narbada* i.e. western Berar including Baglana and portions of Khandesh.

During these year, the Marathas realized the weakness of their artillery, for this had on one occasion forced the *Peshwa* to flee from the field of battle, and the security of Poona was seriously imperilled. That is why the *Peshwa* tried to secure the services of Bussy and when he failed in the attempt he deputed one of the members of his family to receive training under him. But when this too could not be arranged, he secured the services of Ibrahim Khan Gardi, trained under Bussy, and entrusted the task of reorganising the Maratha artillery to him.

Between 1754 and 1758, the *Peshwa* led a number of raids into the Carnatic and secured a large booty from there. But this in the long run alienated the sympathies of the Deccanis against the Marathas. Just then another civil war started in the Nizam's family and the *Peshwa* again tried to take advantage of it. Thus hostilities started once again in 1759 and the artillery under Ibrahim Khan Gardi rendered great services during this campaign. Ahmadnagar, Daulatabad, Burhanpur and Bijapur were occupied and in 1760, the Nizam suffered a crushing defeat in the battle of Udgir. Sadashivarao decided to break the power of the Nizam forever and imposed very severe terms on him. According to the terms of this treaty, the *Peshwa* was assigned a *jagir* worth 60 lakhs of rupees a year in the provinces of Bijapur, Bidar and Aurangabad and Maratha authority over the forts of Asirgarh, Burhanpur, Ahmadnagar, Daulatabad and Bijapur was recognized. He also agreed to continue to pay the *Chauth*. Thus the Marathas smashed up the power of their most formidable opponent. For the the moment it seemed that they would succeed in establishing their undisputed sway over the Deccan by ending or circumscribing the power of the Muslims. But this did not bring them any lasting advantage because within less than a year and a half they received such hectic blows both in the north and the south that the Nizam was able to regain most of his lost territory. Just then the *Peshwa's* family was sharply divided on the issue of succession which led to a rapid decline in his power. But this happened after 1761.

Toeing the line set by his illustrious father, Balaji Bajirao wanted to invade the north and establish Maratha supremacy there. Malwa and Gujrat had already been occupied but Bundelkhand was of far greater strategic importance as from here the Marathas could fan out to the north to invade Awadh and Doab or to the east to enter Bihar and Bengal or to the west to infiltrate into Rajputana. He therefore realized the need of subjugating and strongly garrisoning Bundelkhand. Balaji Bajirao initiated this task in 1741 and by 1747 the whole of Bundelkhand was occupied and Jhansi became one of their important strongholds and centre of political activity.

But he did not meet with equal success in Rajputana because as soon as Maratha power was consolidated in Malwa, jealousies began to crop up among the Pawars, the Holkars and the Sindhias. In order to put an end to this, the *Peshwa* defined their respective spheres of influence. Meantime Jay Singh died in 1743 and a war of succession began among his sons. Ishwari Singh, the eldest son occupied the kingdom but his step-brother Madhava Singh, born of a Sisodiya princess pressed his superior claims under the treaty of 1710 and the Maharana of Mewar intended backing up his claims with force. Both parties appealed to the Marathas for help and while this dispute was still unsettled, Ranoji Sindhia died in 1745 and Jayappa his successor got involved in quarrels with Malhar Rao Holkar and Ramachandra Baba. The result was that Sindhia and Holkar took up the cause of rival princes. The *Peshwa* tried to compose their differences but with no effect. But Ishwari Singh committed suicide by taking poison and Madhava Singh became his successor. He could not satisfy the Maratha lust for gold and getting disgusted with their conduct made an unsuccessful attempt at poisoning both Holkar and Sindhia. He then invited the Marathas for sight-seeing inside the city and once they were in, closed the gates behind them and ordered a general massacre. This infuriated the Marathas and put an end to Maratha-Rajput solidarity. They were planning reprisals when they were suddenly called away to another scene of action. The Marathas returned to Rajputana again in 1754 and during their two year's stay there they added to the number of their enemies by their conduct, although apparently, they had imposed their sway over the whole of Rajasthan.

Muhammad Shah at heart was an enemy of the Marathas and was averse to granting them any concessions. But he had been forced by circumstances to assign them the governorship of Malwa. The *Peshwa* had on that basis become one of his *mansabdars* and he could therefore requisition his services in the hour of need. The *Wazir* too could requisition his services on the same basis. The

Marathas too were eagerly looking forward to the day when they would secure the offices of the Prime Minister and the commander-in-chief of the Emperor and could rule over the whole of northern and southern India in his name. Bajirao I was the first to propose this with the backing of Jay Singh and he had later tried to rope in the support of Abhay Singh Rathor and Rana Amar Singh as well. And when Nadir Shah invaded India, Bajirao started collecting an army for the assistance of the Emperor with Shahu's concurrence. But he unfortunately died in course of his progress towards the north.

Balaji Bajirao had also promised his assistance to the Emperor at the time of his appointment as the governor of Malwa. Malhar Rao Holkar, Ranoji Sindhia, Yeshwant Rao Pawar and Pilaji Jadhav had expressed their adherence to it in 1743. Hence, when the Emperor summoned them for help at the time of Ahmad Shah Abdali's invasion of India in 1748 the *Peshwa* personally went to Delhi. But Ahmad Shah had already suffered a defeat before his arrival. In 1751, Safdar Jang, the Nawab of Awadh solicited Maratha help against the Bangashes of Farrukhabad. Sindhia and Holkar promptly marched up to his assistance. The Afghans and the Rohillas were routed and suffered thousands of casualties. A part of Rohilkhand passed under direct control of the Marathas although they had to encounter constant local opposition. Notwithstanding that, it was a great victory for the Marathas because their authority now extended almost to the gates of Delhi and both the Emperor and his *Wazir* looked up to them for help and protection.

In 1754, Ghaziuddin Secundus deposed Ahmad Shah with Maratha assistance and in return for this the Marathas secured the Doab in *Jagir* and the right of realizing a toll at Gaya and Kurukshetra. The Marathas now began to embroil themselves in Delhi politics. They fought against the Jats on behalf of the Emperor and thus lost their goodwill. They invaded the Punjab, drove our Timur Shah, the son of Ahmad Shah and occupied Lahore in April 1758. Thus their empire extended from Cuttack to Attock and the *Indus* and the *Himalayas* formed its boundary. But these successes brought no gain to the Marathas. Instead, they proved to be the cause of a great disaster to their arms and reputation. Raghunath Rao had no doubt gained great military successes during 1753-1758 but he had unduly increased the financial burden of the Maratha state. He had made many enemies in the north, chief among whom were the Rohillas, the Jats, the Rajputs and the Nawab of Awadh. At the same time, he also provoked a quarrel with Ahmad Shah Abdali without making the necessary military preparations. The result was that Abdali led another invasion in 1759 and fought an engagement against Dattaji Sindhia in January 1760

in which the latter was defeated and killed. Two months later Holkar was also routed. The Marathas retaliated by leading a powerful counter-offensive the next year but suffered a far more disastrous defeat. Thus in an effort to bring the Emperor under their sway, the Marathas invited ruin on themselves.

As far as the power and prestige of the Emperor was concerned it reached the vanishing point. The Marathas must partly share the responsibility for reducing the Emperor to this sorry state, because, it was as a reaction against their high-handedness that Ahmad Shah secured local support so that he could do as he pleased with the government of the Punjab and Delhi.

The hundred years from 1660 to 1760 witnessed a long-drawn-out struggle between the Marathas and the Emperor of Delhi. The first 20 years of this period

Conclusion

were a period of great trial and tribulation for the Marathas but under the able leadership of Shivaji, they successfully defied the authority of the Emperor by founding a kingdom in the teeth of his opposition. The next twenty years were years of defeat for the Marathas but even inspite of that their organisation could not be totally disrupted and soon a wave of enthusiasm for liberty spread over the whole of Maharashtra. This finally defeated Alamgir (the world-conquerer) and drove him to death in utter frustration. The Marathas effected a fresh recovery under the leadership of the *Peshwas* and the fostering care of Shahu while under Bajirao I and Balaji Bajirao the Maratha empire reached its zenith. The victory at Udgir (1760) and against the son of Abdali (1758) signalled Maratha expansion to the pinnacle of its glory. By that time they had already acquired full control over Malwa, Gujerat, Bundelkhand, Orissa, half of the Deccan and a part of the Doab while from the rest they had been levying *Chauth*. The power of the Timurids survived only in name and the crown of India itself seemed to be within their easy grasp. But just then there was a turn of the tide. The support of the people which had helped the rise of the Marathas to power was now lost because of their depredations and a general policy of loot and plunder. Discipline, organisation and moral stamina had brought them success. But they now became a prey to the moral lapses prevailing at the Mughal court and they too carried at the battle of Panipat an army of camp followers consisting of slave-girls, wives and concubines. They gave up their own technique of fighting in favour of pseudo-European methods and suffered a complete disaster. This badly shook the Marathas but they steadied up once again and effected a fresh recovery. But the empire in whose opposition they had taken up arms was levelled low for ever. About a hundred years later a fresh attempt was

made to infuse new vigour into its dry bones but it could not bear this artificial transfusion and collapsed for good. The Marathas thus had a large share in liquidating the empire of the Mughals.

Further Readings

1. Sardesai—*New History of the Marathas* Vol. II.
2. Dighe—*Peshwa Bajirao and Maratha Expansion*.
3. Sinha—*Rise of the Peshwas*.
4. Sarkar—*The Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vols. I. & II.
5. Irvine—*Later Mughals*, Vols. I & II.
6. Raghubir Singh—*Malwa in Transition*.
7. *Cambridge History of India* Vol. IV Chapter, XIV.
8. Rcu—*Marwar ka Itihas* (Hindi) Vol. I.

CHAPTER XVIII

REBELLIONS IN PROVINCES

Ever since the establishment of the Timurid dynasty in India, there had been rebellions here and there. Before the time of Aurangzeb there had been no revolt which the Emperor did not overcome sooner or later. But from the time of Aurangzeb revolts started which ended only with the end of the imperial authority in that region. After the death of the last great Mughal Emperor, all the provinces became independent one after another and by 1765 the Emperor came to such a pass that not only did he have no empire, but lacked even a safe place to rest his head. In some of the provinces, new political powers rose under the leadership of new revolutionary leaders while in others persons appointed by the Emperor himself repudiated at least his authority in practice and established their *de facto* sovereignty.

The causes of these revolts were numerous. The imperial court included persons of diverse races, faiths and lands so that a certain amount of jealousy always subsisted among them. When the Emperor was strong, vigilant and capable, all these groups remained at peace. But when his position showed any signs of weakness or when he was suspected of favouring a particular group to the detriment of others, some unscrupulous or ambitious persons rose in revolt. These fissures became more pronounced in the eighteenth century that organised rival groups came into being. During this period ascendancy of one inevitably led to the persecution of, and discrimination against, other groups. Consequently, the persons adversely affected rose in revolt.

Secondly, the expansion of the empire had invariably involved loss of privilege to many a ruling family and its nobles. Members of these dispossessed classes sometimes rose in revolt to regain their past glory and status. Local sympathy and support was easily secured so that suppression of such risings presented serious difficulties and took a long time.

Thirdly, with the expansion of the empire to distant parts of the land a number of provinces were formed that were very far from the capital and where nobody liked to go. Those who were sent there occasionally rose in revolt because of dissatisfaction with their lot. While others who stayed on for long

years acquired popular support and became aspirants for royalty. Distance from the capital enabled them to prepare secretly for revolt without attracting much notice, and those who were deputed against them did not always act with vigour and energy and were anxious to get away as soon as possible after some sort of success. This encouraged the rebels.

Fourthly, sometimes new policies initiated by the Emperor caused discontent and led to revolts in provinces as under Akbar and Aurangzeb. When Akbar tried to enforce military and fiscal regulations with uniform strictness, it provoked opposition in many quarters, while in Bengal it assumed the form of a serious revolt. Similarly, the law of escheats led to the revolt of Jujhar Singh.

Fifthly, disputed successions also led to revolts in provinces. From the time of Jahangir, royal princes began to be appointed governors of large provinces. Henceforward the problem of succession became a fruitful cause of revolts in the provinces.

Lastly, some governors happened to be exceptionally able and ambitious. When they found the power of the Emperor rapidly-declining, they could hardly resist the temptation of carving out independent kingdoms for themselves and rose in revolt at the earliest opportunity.

As long as the Emperor had enough money and his position was not unduly weak, rebellions had no chance of success.

For the financial and military resources of the local rebel being inferior to those of the Emperor, his defeat was ultimately inevitable, depending on the ability and resourcefulness of the person deputed to suppress the revolt and the extent of support vouchsafed to him from the centre. If the Khan-i-Khanan had received even half as much help as was given to Khurram in 1617, he would have succeeded against Ambar but in the absence of such support he failed to suppress him and he continued to defy the imperial authority with impunity. The personal influence and ability of the rebel also affected his success or failure. Mere military strength was not enough to ensure success. Diplomacy was equally or even more useful. Similarly, the success or failure of a revolt depended on the nature of the terrain and the extent of popular support available to the rebel. Support from a powerful neighbour or a European trading company also contributed to success of local revolts. But usually only people gifted with a strong personality, a sturdy common sense and the ability to adjust their movements to local conditions had any chance for success.

Although there were numerous minor risings in the reign of Akbar, revolts of a provincial level occurred only in Malwa and Jaunpur. In Malwa, Adham Khan adopted a rebellious attitude and retained the booty captured during the war. But mere intimidation brought him to his knees. Abdullah Khan Uzbek also raised the standard of revolt in the same province. But he too was easily overpowered and the rebellion came to an end.

In comparison to this, the Uzbek revolt in Jaunpur was of a far more dangerous character. There were many causes of disturbance here. Ali Quli Khan-i-Zaman had taken a prominent part in the defeat of Hemu. He therefore felt that in recognition of his services he should rank next only to the Regent. This had made him very arrogant. Secondly, he had acquired Lucknow, Jaunpur and other possessions in the east by his own valour and resources. He had therefore no sense of gratitude towards the Emperor. Besides both Munim Khan and Bairam Khan were his personal friends. He therefore felt that as long as they were in power nothing would be done against him. His impudence reached a climax when he enticed away from the capital a handsome royal page of Humayun, named Shaham Beg and turned a deaf ear to all demands for surrendering him. When he found resistance impossible, he sent him underground and the latter was killed when he got entangled in a scandal. Khan-i-Zaman's revolt lasted for about ten years. Twice during this period he withheld all the booty normally due to the Emperor and on one occasion had the *Khuba* read in the name of Mirza Hakim. Khan-i-Zaman felt that the Emperor was unduly favourable to the Persians. He was also critical of the religious policy of Akbar. He was further convinced that the Emperor lacked the strength to suppress him. Besides, if he adopted an unduly severe attitude, he could call in Mirza Hakim to stand against him and deprive him of the throne itself by attacking him from the east while Hakim pressed him from the west. That is why he rebelled again and again.

The first step taken against him was the despatch of Qiya Khan Gung in 1559 to occupy Lucknow. Khan-i-Zaman gave in and Gung seized Lucknow. Just then Khan-i-Zaman had to meet a fierce attack from the Afghans in the east, but his brother Bahadur checked their advance and the Afghans were repulsed with heavy losses. But no part of the booty was sent to the Emperor. In 1561, the Emperor attacked him via Kalpi and Kara Manikpur. Khan-i-Zaman was once again humbled and he personally waited on the Emperor at Kara to tender apologies to him. In 1565 and 1566, he rebelled again but through Munim Khan's intervention succeeded in

pacifying the Emperor. Finally in 1566 he formed a design to depose the Emperor. By that time Akbar's position had been considerably stabilised and he was unwilling to give any quarter to this confirmed rebel. He therefore, first drove out Hakim and then moved against the Uzbeks. Khan-i-Zaman and Bahadur were killed in course of fighting and the Emperor drastically cleaned up all pockets of disaffection.

Just about this time, Asaf Khan the governor of Kara Manikpur also rose in revolt for fear that his former lapses might be visited with punishment. He had been deputed to conquer Gondwana in 1564. He had secured from there 1000 elephants, 100 pots full of gold coins and a lot of gold, silver and other valuables. But he had sent to the Emperor only 200 elephants and had misappropriated the rest himself. When he noticed the strength of the imperial army he got frightened and fled for his life. But he soon came round, offered submission, tendered apologies for his past conduct and surrendered the rest of the booty.

Another serious rising of the time of Akbar was the revolt of the Mirzas. They had first been granted *Jagirs* in the Punjab and practically the whole of that province was held by them. The Emperor later gave them Sambhal instead and effected a dispersal of them to different places. During the revolt of Khan-i-Zaman, the Mirzas too rose in revolt at Sambhal. But they lost nerve at the approach of the Emperor and fled to Malwa where they sought to entrench themselves. The army raised for the conquest of Ranthambhor was diverted against them and they fled to Gujerat where they acquired considerable power. But as noticed earlier they were annihilated in course of the conquest and settlement of Gujerat. Then there were rebellions in Bengal, Bihar and Gujerat, but they were all local risings directed against provincial governors rather than revolts of governors against their imperial master.

In the reign of Jahangir there were only two revolts headed by provincial governors. The first was led by his own son Shah-jahan which has been discussed in a foregoing chapter. The other was an offshoot of the first and was led by Mahabat Khan.

Rebellion of Mahabat Khan (1662)

Dr. Beni Prasad speaks of Mahabat Khan thus. "Early in life he had entered the rank of *Ahadis* and had been placed on the personal staff of Prince Salim. Upright in character, open of heart, frank and fearless in talk, he won the affection and respect of his master.....A high sense of self-respect, bordering on pride, was ingrained in his nature. Blunt and outspoken he was free from the taint of servility and could never brook domination.".....

But he had boundless devotion for his master and had made his mark as a commander of great personal valour,

dauntless courage and capacity for organisation and leadership. These qualities had secured for him a large Rajput following which had landed Tod into the error of describing him as a nephew of Maharana Pratap. Mahabat Khan was no mere soldier. He possessed high diplomatic and administrative talents as well. He was also in the good books of his master. He therefore had a steep rise to fame and though in 1605 his *mansab* stood at 1500, soon rose to 2000 after the suppression of the revolt of Khusrau, by 1622 it had shot up to 6000 *Zat*, 5000 *Sawar*. But he did not like domination by Nurjahan. This checked his advancement for some time. But when Shah-jahan rebelled against his father, all eyes turned to Mahabat for suppressing his revolt. This confidence was justified by his subsequent achievement. But his relations with Nurjahan remained as bad as ever. He wanted that instead of leaning on the support of women, the Emperor should entrust the task of government to masculine talent. But Jahangir could not satisfy him on this count. This was at the root of his rebellion.

After suppression of the rebellion of Shahjahan, Nurjahan sent Mahabat Khan away as governor of Bengal because she scented danger in his continued association with Parvez. Asaf Khan and Nurjahan then formed a plan of disgracing him. He was asked to submit a full account of the moneys received during the last disturbances and to surrender to the Emperor all elephants and riches captured in course of fighting. They also sent financial experts for examining and auditing the accounts furnished by him. Mahabat Khan saw through the evil design and was beside himself with rage.

He started at the head of 5000 picked Rajput soldiers on the ostensible ground to explain things personally to the Emperor, while Asaf Khan had foolishly sent the whole army across the *Jhelum* without retaining adequate escort for the Emperor who was still on the east bank. Mahabat Khan seized this opportunity, made a sudden swoop on the imperial camp, burnt the bridge thrown across the *Jhelum*, and secured the person of the Emperor. His behaviour inside the royal tent was so provocative and indecent that Jahangir took serious umbrage and was on the point of attacking him himself, but the gravity of the situation restrained his hand. Nurjahan and Asaf Khan felt utterly humiliated and when their efforts to secure the release of the Emperor failed, Nurjahan allowed herself to be captured by the rebels. Mahabat Khan held the Emperor as prisoner but he kept up the show of emancipating him from the pernicious influence of Asaf Khan and Nurjahan, and of governing the land according to his wishes.

But Nurjahan had not been napping. She matured her plans with great deliberation and calmness. She advised Jahan-

gir to feign pleasure at the conduct of Mahabat Khan, lead a gay life and speak ill of herself so that Mahabat Khan might be deluded in the belief that the Emperor was really in his favour. Jahangir played his part with consummate success. At the same time she secretly organised a counter-revolution, enlisting the support of all those who had been alienated by the arrogance of Mahabat and the impudence of his followers. When her preparations had been completed she proposed to launch a vigorous offensive, but Mahabat Khan was forewarned and fled carrying with him certain members of the imperial family as a shield for his safety. Nurjahan sent him a peremptory order demanding surrender of all these persons and directing him to proceed to Thatta. Mahabat Khan had no option but to submit, but when he learnt that a large army was proceeding against him, he went over to Shahjahan. Soon after this, the Emperor died and Mahabat Khan was relieved of all anxiety.

This rebellion stands in a class by itself. If Mahabat Khan had acted with a little more restraint and sagacity, he could have easily built up an anti-Asaf-Nurjahan front and could have ruled on behalf of the Emperor with its support. But he could not rise to the occasion. He, however, succeeded in holding the Emperor and the Empress as captives and for a time exercised supreme authority. But he was opposed neither to the Emperor nor to his dynasty. Nor did he desire to found an independent kingdom of his own because he was convinced of its being doomed to failure. His action was inspired by hostility to Asaf Khan and Nurjahan alone. Notwithstanding that, his action seriously dislocated the affairs of the empire and subjected Jahangir to a humiliation which no Timurid sovereign had ever to suffer in the sixteenth or the seventeenth century.

The most violent rebellions of the reign of Shahjahan were led by his sons towards the close of his reign. Earlier in the reign

Revolt of
Khan-i-Jahan

Lodi (1629-1631)

had occurred a rebellion by Khan-i-Jahan

Lodi, the governor in the Deccan. Strange

circumstances conspired to bring about this

rebellion. Khan-i-Jahan had enjoyed the favour of both Jahangir and Nurjahan. The Emperor had always treated him kindly and had lavished great honours on him. He had succeeded Mahabat Khan as Parvez's deputy in 1625 and when the latter died was allowed to step into his shoes. He had hoped that Shahryar would be the next sovereign and had therefore been indifferent towards Shahjahan. Even when the latter had been crowned the Emperor, he did not make adequate amends for his past remissness. On the contrary, he decided to rebel and marched in force into Malwa. He realized his foolhardiness only when there were heavy desertions among his followers. He now appealed to the Emperor for mercy.

Shahjahan gave him a free pardon and showed no mark of displeasure when he went to court.

But Khan-i-Jahan was seized with fear and suspicion. He felt he was not receiving his due and if anybody ever remarked even in a jest that he would be thrown into prison, he became unduly sanguine and alarmed for his safety and was in constant dread of assassination. Just then, Asaf Khan, the new *Wazir* instituted strict auditing of the accounts of all the higher officers and those that were found guilty of any irregularities were seriously taken to task. This alarmed Khan-i-Jahan since he too had accepted a bribe from Murtaza II and had been guilty of treason against the state. When he could no longer bear this terrible strain on his nerves, he suddenly fled the camp. An attempt was made to capture him in his flight but he eluded the grasp of his pursuers and sought shelter with Murtaza II. The Emperor took prompt and effective measures against him and he was finally driven to bay after his adventures in the Deccan, Malwa, Baghelkhand and Bundelkhand, and died fighting. The author of the *Maasir-ul-Umara* says that Khan-i-Jahan had no faith in the success of his enterprise and could therefore never put up a bold fight. He is said to have confided to his son that he was behaving in that manner only to induce the Emperor to permit him to go to Mecca and to prepare the ground for his elevation in the service of the Emperor. Whatever might be the truth of the matter, this is, however, certain that his rebellion proved most harmful to all concerned. Suspicion, fear, envy and misguided pride upset his mental balance and drove him to the jaws of death.

In the reign of Aurangzeb, no provincial governor dared defy his authority. But there were many who were secretly

hostile to him. They all tried to build up reserves of power and to secure such allies as could help realize their ambitions when the aged Emperor passed away. All his sons fall into the same category. Among officers in the Deccan, Bahadur Khan, Diler Khan and Zulfiqar Khan were all suspected of harbouring such motives. Besides these, there was a much larger number of those who acted in collaboration with the enemy and accepted money from him. But the Emperor could never fully discover who these traitors were. He could not punish these men of doubtful integrity as long as the Maratha war was on and the latter proved a running sore which knew no healing. Hence these persons of suspected loyalty could never be wholly weeded out.

After the death of Aurangzeb, his empire began to break up with unusual rapidity and within less than fifty years it had well-nigh ended. *Revolts of the Eighteenth century* had well-nigh ended. *Factions at court and rebellions in the provinces* contributed to it. We shall now review the course of how

different provinces obtained independence but it must always be borne in mind that no provincial governor openly asserted his independence. On the contrary he always kept up the pretence that the Emperor was his overlord.

Zulfiqar Khan had begun to plan the foundation of an independent kingdom for himself ever since he had been sent to invest the fort of Jinji. But Azam's defeat upset his plans. Through Bahadur Shah's generosity and favour he obtained the Viceroyalty of the Deccan in 1708 and was permitted to stay on at the Capital while Daud Khan was permitted as his deputy in the Deccan. In 1713, the defeat of Jahandar Shah ensured the elevation of Farrukhsiyar to the throne. Zulfiqar had then proposed to his father that they should fly to the Deccan along with the Emperor and should carve out an independent kingdom for themselves there. But Asad Khan did not approve of this and Zulfiqar Khan was soon killed. His place as the Viceroy of the Deccan was then offered to Chingilich Khan who received the title first of Khan-i-Dauran and then of Nizam-ul-mulk.

Nizam-ul-mulk had been in the Deccan during the reign of Aurangzeb and had acquired sufficient experience of conditions obtaining there. He coveted the viceroyalty of the Deccan most because he knew that it was easier to acquire autonomy there than anywhere else. He acted as the viceroy in the Deccan from 1713 to 1715 and started consolidating his position by diplomacy and war. But he was soon displaced by Husain Ali who obtained the Viceroyalty for himself. In 1720 Nizam returned to the Deccan again and seized its viceroyalty by defeating Husain Ali's nephew. As Muhammad Shah was himself eager to break the power of the Sayyads, he won over Nizam-ul-mulk to his side and confirmed him as the Viceroy of the Deccan. But within a years he had to go to the north once again because the Emperor sought to stabilise his position by appointing him as the *Wazir*. Nizam-ul-mulk now secured for himself Malwa and Gujerat and when he discovered that he was not liked at court he marched away to the Deccan without waiting for the permission of the Emperor.

The Emperor was greatly offended at this insolence and appointed the deputy Viceroy Mubariz Khan as the full fledged Viceroy and directed him to send Nizam-ul-mulk to court dead or alive. Mubariz Khan sought an alliance with the Marathas and the Nawab of Carnatic and the prospects for Nizam-ul-mulk looked very bleak indeed. An army was sent against him from the north as well. But fortunately for him two things turned out in his favour. Shahu opposed an alliance with Mubariz Khan and Bajirao also adopted the same line of action. The latter actively took up the cause of the Nizam, checked the progress of

Mubariz Khan and opposed him in war. The other was the lack of foresight in Mubariz Khan who in his vanity initiated the fight without waiting for reinforcements from the north and lost his life in the sequel. Nizam-ul-mulk sent his head to the Emperor and the latter felt greatly humiliated by this turn of the events. From now on he acquired virtual independence and the Emperor never got an opportunity to interfere in his affairs and on the contrary the Emperor was obliged to confer on him the title of Asafjah and to confirm him in the Viceroyalty of the of Deccan in 1725.

Even then, he kept up the show of respecting the wishes of the Emperor in consonance with his own interests. Thus in regard to the war against the Marathas he wrote to Jay Singh that he had won over Shambhuji II and a number of lesser Maratha leaders so that the *Chhatrapati* and the *Peshwa* would soon reap the fruits of their action. But he was at the same time critical of the Emperor's attitude towards him which suggests that he wanted that the Emperor should wholeheartedly recognise his permanent authority over the Deccan. It was with this end in view that the Nizam occasionally submitted to the wishes of the Emperor. Thus when the Marathas acquired undue strength and occupied Malwa, Bundelkhand and Gujerat he once more answered the summons of the Emperor and stayed in the north from 1737 to 1740. But this time his visit to the north proved beneficial neither to the Emperor nor to himself. He therefore returned to the south and spent the rest of his life in consolidating his possessions there.

Asafjah Nizam-ul-mulk possessed all the qualities necessary for founding an independent kingdom. He was a skilful general, a competent paternal despot and a clever diplomat. He did his best to establish peace and security in the *Subas* of the Deccan and suppressed with a high hand all disaffected nobles and intransigent officers but all those who were willing to act with honesty and devotion were forgiven and treated kindly. He put down theft and robbery and kept the taxes low for the convenience of the peasants. Assured of internal peace and security, agriculture and industry revived and the country became rich and prosperous. He thus secured the support and goodwill of his people. He made strenuous efforts to put an end to Maratha raids but his efforts in this direction did not prove wholly successful. In spite of Maratha opposition, his power went on increasing and the provinces held by him were at one time estimated to yield 18 crores of rupees a year, this revenue even at that time was much greater than that of the Emperor. As he remained in power from 1724 to 1748, the administrative edifice set up by him acquired stability and as a result of the defection of the Nizam all lands south of the *Narbada* were lost to the empire and the foundations of the Asafjahi dynasty were securely laid.

Just as Asafjah Nizam-ul-mulk had founded an independent dynasty in Hyderabad while paying lip service to the Emperor, Murshid Quli Khan established an independent Nawabship in Bengal. Murshid Quli was the deputy governor and *Diwan* of Bengal and Orissa under Prince Azim. Shortly before the death of Aurangzeb, Azim had left the province entrusting its government to Murshid Quli and after the coronation of his father had stayed away at the capital. During this period Azim's son Farrukhsiyar was in nominal charge of the province while the substance of power rested in the hands of Murshid Quli. In 1713, Farrukhsiyar appointed him permanent *Nazim* (Governor) of Bengal and in 1719, he was allowed to combine with it the *Nazim* of Orissa as well. He had been holding the office of the *Diwan* ever since the days of Aurangzeb and as Deputy Governor it was he who had really been ruling these provinces all these years. The *farmans* of 1713 and 1719 gave a *de jure* basis to his *de facto* authority. He was a very capable person and was genuinely interested in the welfare of the people. Hence he acquired great fame and his authority was firmly established in the hearts of the people. During his regime, the province became rich and prosperous and was regarded as the wealthiest and the quietest region in the empire.

Murshid Quli died in 1727 and was succeeded by his son-in-law Shujauddin. Muhammad Shah not only made no interference in this region but even added to the power of Shujauddin by offering him in 1733 the governorship of Bihar as well. Thus the successors of Murshid Quli acquired hereditary authority over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and the sovereignty of the Emperor over this region practically came to an end.

The Emperor no longer exercised the right of appointing anybody as the *Nazim* or the *Diwan* of any one of these provinces. The most that he did was to grant his approval to whosoever succeeded to the Nawabship of this region by issuing a *farman* in his favour in consideration of a money payment. This is best illustrated by the events of 1740. After Shujauddin's death in 1739, he was succeeded by his son Sarfaraz Khan. But in 1740 Alivardi Khan the deputy governor of Bihar turned rebellious and seized power in Bengal by putting Sarfaraz to death. He then asked for a *farman* from the Emperor and sent him a present of two crores of rupees. The Emperor promptly complied. Under pressure from the Marathas he sent a *farman* to Alivardi Khan in 1746 directing him to remit to the Emperor a sum of rupees 25 lakhs and 10 lakhs respectively as the *Chauth* from Bengal and Bihar so that the Emperor might pay it to the Marathas so that the eastern provinces might be free from the danger of their depredations. But Alivardi Khan paid no heed to this *farman*. This goes to show that Bengal,

Bihar and Orissa were now lost to the empire and the local Nawabs alone were responsible for internal security and defence against foreign aggression. But like the Nizam, they too never formally repudiated the authority of the Emperor and continued the fiction of being his deputies.

Another province to become the seat of an independent Muslim kingdom was Awadh. The founder of this kingdom was Burhan-ul-mulk Saadat Khan. His original name was Muhammad Amin and he was a descendant of the Sayyads of Nishapur and a follower of the Shia faith. He was initially a member of personal retainers of the Emperor called 'Balashahi'. But because of his association in the Sayyad conspiracy he received the *mansab* first of 5000 and then of 7000. The title of Burhan-ul-mulk was also conferred on him just then. His rise to fame began from here. He was appointed governor of Agra and was counted among the principal amirs at the court. But in 1723, he was driven out of the capital as a sort of punishment but considering his status and importance he was assigned the governorship of Awadh. This proved a blessing in disguise and he succeeded in founding an independent kingdom there. Saadat Khan favoured strong measures against the Marathas and he repeatedly requested the Emperor that he should be deputed to suppress the Marathas in collaboration with the Nizam. But the Emperor never agreed to this. He fought against Nadir Shah on behalf of the Emperor in the battle of Karnal but later adopted the treasonable course by leading him to Delhi on account of jealousy against the Nizam. But Nadir Shah soon got dissatisfied with him and Saadat poisoned himself to death to escape his wrath.

Saadat Khan ruled over Awadh from 1723 to 1739. During his long tenure, the people became accustomed to look upon him as their real master. He assured them peace and security and put down all internal strife.

He had no son and was therefore succeeded by his sister's son and son-in-law Safdarjang. Muhammad Shah granted him a *farman* in confirmation of his succession. Safdarjang was a gifted leader and a bold commander. He fought a number of battles and maintained the appearance of subordination to the Emperor. In 1748, he secured the office of the *wazir* and since then the ruling members of his dynasty came to be known as *Nawab-wazirs*. Safdarjang loved to have an army of excellent soldiers and he did his best to keep them happy and contented. One of his regiments consisted of Persian Turks, called the Qizalbashs and the Mughals. Originally they numbered only 7000 but when the news was spread that he granted them higher wages and allowed them many other concessions as well, their number swelled up to 20,000. It is said that many Kashmiris who could speak Persian fluently

and belonged to the Shia faith passed muster as Persians and secured admission into this regiment. Safdarjang paid the Persians at the rate of Rs 50/- per month while the rest got only Rs 35/-. At the time of muster and review he would sanction promotions in salary sometimes to the tune of Rs 10/- P.M. if he was impressed by the smartness of a soldier. He fought a number of wars against the Jats, Rohillas and the Marathas. These added both to the extent of his territory and his influence. If he had possessed superior administrative talents, his influence would have increased still further. During his reign, Awadh was in a flourishing state and its revenues rose so high that the Nawab never felt any dearth of money even inspite of extravagance. He spent 46 lakhs of rupees in the marriage of his son and heir to the throne. After his death in 1754, Shujauddaula became the *Nawab-wazir* of Awadh. Thus in close proximity to Delhi and Agra, a new Muslim state extending from Rohilkhand and Doab to the confines of Bihar was founded. The dominant elements here were the Shias.

The region between the kingdom of Awadh and the Mughal capital was dominated by the Afghans and they too succeeded in carving out an independent kingdom for themselves during the period of the disintegration of the empire. Muhammad Khan Bangash was the first to come into prominence. He was born in 1663 in Mau Rashidabad (now known as Qayamganj after the name of his son) in the Farrukhabad district. He raised a band of Afghans whom he employed in plundering raids and in fighting the battles of local *jagirdars* on payment. The number of his followers soon began to swell because he was an able commander and took good care never to undertake anything which might damp the enthusiasm or lower the morale of his troops.

In 1713, he came into greater prominence because he got a place among the courtiers of Farrukhsiyar as a reward for his services in the battle against Jahandar Shah. In 1714, he founded the town of Farrukhabad after the name of his patron and succeeded in acquiring a large *jagir* in that region by the valour of his arms and the favour of Farrukhsiyar and Muhammad Shah. At one time it extended from Aligarh to practically the south-eastern limit of Kanpur district. Sarkar estimates its area at about 7500 sq. miles because it included the whole of modern district of Farrukhabad, half of Kanpur, practically the whole of Mainpuri and Etah districts and portions of Badaun, Shahjahanpur, Aligarh and Etawah districts. His influence increased so much that he was appointed governor of Allahabad and Malwa. But Bangash never aimed at independence and Nadir Shah told Muhammad Shah as a tribute to Bangash's loyalty—that although he had received invitations from all principal nobles he had none from Bangash. This shows that it was contrary to his nature to take resort to treason to gain an advantage for himself. On the contrary he was scrupulously faithful to his engagements.

On his death in 1743, he was succeeded by his son Qayam Khan. Safdarjang the Nawab of Awadh it may be mentioned wanted to destroy the power of the Afghans but failed in the attempt and the Bangashes retained their status as powerful *jagirdars*.

Another stronghold of the Afghans was Katchar. The Afghans inhabiting this region were known as Rohillas (i.e. residents of the Rohilla district). They had such a tremendous influence in this region that The Rohillas Katchar has ever since been known as Rohilkhand. The Nawab of Rampur comes of the same line.

The first man to acquire any prominence in this region was Daud but he could not rise above the status of a petty *jagirdar*. His adopted son Ali Muhammad Ali Muhammad Rohilla, Jat convert to Islam became the Khan Rohilla leader of the Rohillas in 1721 and was the founder of the independent kingdom of Rohillas. He raised an army of Afghans and started reducing to his authority one district after another while the empire was rapidly declining. In 1727, he defeated a *Khwajasara* of the Emperor and seized all his property. This raised his prestige among the Afghans and he adopted the title of Nawab. He then started living in royal style and held court like independent princes.

By bribing the *Wazir* he secured an imperial *farman* empowering him to raise taxes from the region under his authority. In 1737, the Emperor conferred the title of Nawab on him which enhanced his prestige still further. During Nadir Shah's invasion of India in 1739, he extended his influence to Moradabad and occupied most of the region included in that sarkar. Raja Harmand Arora retaliated by leading an army against him but was defeated and killed. Ali Muhammad thus secured a large treasure and considerable ammunition as spoils of war and his fame and prestige rose higher than ever. His authority soon extended to the whole of Bareilly and Moradabad and portions of Hirdoi and Badaun. Although this formed a part of the *jagir* of the *Wazir*, he procured an imperial *farman* appointing Ali Muhammad as the governor of Katchar in order to secure Rohilla support for himself. He then occupied, in due course, Pilibhit, Bijnor and the sub-Himalayan region of Kumaon and increased the number of his armed retainers to 30,000.

This constant rise in his power finally alarmed the Emperor and the Nawab of Awadh and in 1745 the Emperor personally led a force against him. Ali Muhammad made his submission, accepted a *mansab* of 4000 and agreed to exchange Sarhind for Katchar. But when in 1748 Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Punjab, Ali Muhammad returned to Katchar at the head of his forces and driving out the local *jagirdars* reoccupied the whole tract.

But his career soon came to an end. His possessions were divided into three parts to one of which Hafiz Rahmat Khan succeeded as the leader. He was appointed Regent of Ali Muhammad's son Sadullah Khan. Safdarjang, the Nawab of Awadh induced Qayam Khan Bangash to make war against the Rohillas. But in 1748, Hafiz Rahmat Khan defeated and killed Qavam Khan and seized a part of Bangash territory as well. But Hafiz Rahmat Khan prudently composed his quarrel with the Bangashes and in 1752 when Safdarjang sought to seize the *jagir* of Ahmad Bangash with Maratha assistance, he marched his troops for the defence of the Bangashes and saved them from certain ruin. In the third battle of Panipat (1761), the Rohillas sided with Abdali and secured many concessions from him. Since then, the Rohillas emerged as an independent state. They also seized Delhi for some time but their power failed to acquire permanence because of the hostility of the Marathas and the Nawab of Awadh.

The foundation of independent kingdoms of Hyderabad in the Deccan, Bengal in the east and Awadh and Rohilkhand in the central region deprived the empire of some of its most prosperous provinces. Rajputana had regained its freedom almost immediately after 1707. The Marathas had occupied Malwa, Gujerat and Bundelkhand before 1740. Thus the empire now comprised only of Afghanistan, Punjab, Delhi and Agra. Here too the authority of the Emperor was rapidly declining, for Zakariya Khan ruled over the Punjab almost as an autonomous prince and invaders from the north-west gradually seized the north-western regions of the empire. The Emperor now possessed nothing but a hallowed name and was now made a pawn by the Afghans and the Marathas for furthering their respective aims. But they too failed to hold their own against British diplomacy and naval power so that the Emperor was shorn of even the glory of his name and it was left to the foreigners to preside over the burial of the empire for good.

Further Readings

1. Shah Nawaz Khan—*Maasir-ul-Umara* (Tr. by Bani Prasad)
2. Irvine—*Later Mughals*, Vols. I & II.
3. Sarkar—*Fall of the Mughal Empire* Vol. I.
4. Ashirvadilal—*Nawabs of Awadh*.
5. Smith—*Akbar the Great Moghul*.
6. Beni Prasad—*History of Jahangir*.
7. Saksena—*History of Shahjahan of Delhi*

CHAPTER XIX

FOREIGN INVASIONS

Within 30 years of the death of Aurangzeb, the western boundary of India became so vulnerable that it offered little opposition to a foreign invader. Aurangzeb did not attempt reconquest of Qandahar but he had always kept a vigilant eye on the north-western frontier and the provinces lying in that region. That is why he had tried to reconcile and pacify the tribal people. During his reign, Amin Khan (1677-1698) and Shah Alam (1679-1707) followed a cautious policy and the internal organisation of Kabul was satisfactory so that the taxes were paid regularly, roads to India were kept clear and the tribal people kept at peace.

But after Shah Alam's departure from Kabul, the empire passed through such kaleidoscopic changes—and all leading to decline and ruin—that defence of the frontiers could not always be attended to. The Emperors were degenerate, indolent, dissolute and worthless. They had neither the ability nor the inclination to grasp the needs of a far-flung empire. Nor did they have the good sense to appoint able men to high offices or to retain them if they captured them by force. Even a casual whisper that a minister was plotting to overthrow the sovereign was enough to land these foolish monarchs into intrigues against their own ministers and to issue secret orders in contravention of their own *farman*s. When they failed in such mean and contemptible tactics, they shamelessly flattered the successful rebel. It was therefore impossible to have any respect or devotion for them. Their only admirers were base eunuchs and vulgar prostitutes. They lived in shame and died in disgrace because they lacked the capacity of either to lead an honourable life or to face death with courage. When Jahandar Shah was defeated he had himself clean-shaved and fled in the company of his concubine Lal Kumari. When Farrukhsiyar was arraigned by the Sayyad Brothers and realized that his deposition was imminent he entered the *harem* and started crying among his ladies.

When such was the state of the Emperor, the nobles could not be expected to be wise, efficient or moral. Hence every ambitious man tried to secure by hook or crook some governorship or ministry at the centre and spent all his energy in organising a group of his supporters. But if a new man succeeded in stepp-

ing into high office, most of the people tried to safeguard their interests by turning towards him and adopting the role of becoming his yes-man. That is why although this period has been described as a period of struggle between the Irani, Turani and Hindustani parties it never precluded the possibility of using an Irani against an Irani, a Turani against a Turani; an Afghan against an Afghan, a Rajput against a Rajput, a Maratha against a Maratha or a Hindustani against a Hindustani. Thus the nobles became exceedingly selfish, mean, greedy of gold and office, fond of intrigues and sensual pleasures. This dissolute and degenerate nobility was unequal to the task of stepping into the breach created by their worthless masters.

When the monarch and his nobles were in such a sorry state of affairs, subordinate staff could hardly be expected to remain honest and efficient. The person looked upon by them as their master was suddenly shunted off to another sphere and the new governor brought a new band of tax-collectors but paid little or no heed to internal security. He would often sack all old encumbrants and replace them by his own favourites. This happened with such sickening frequency that local officers could never feel secure in their posts and therefore tried to embezzle government funds and amass a fortune within the shortest possible time. This ruined the peasant and the business community. As if this was not enough, they were also subjected to plundering and marauding raids by bands of dacoits and robbers composed of Jats, Sikhs, Rajputs, Pathans, Marathas or for the matter of that any bold spirit, irrespective of caste or creed. Hence agriculture was neglected and many fertile regions were converted into desolate wastes.

The revenues of the state came down with a crash with the result that the Emperor could not pay the bureaucracy or the soldiery. Each noble had to depend on himself for his civil and military budget. Whosoever failed to provide it was faced with a mutiny. Thousands of soldiers in the imperial service were disbanded. Some of them turned professional dacoits while others joined the ranks of ambitious nobles and became determined enemies of the Emperor.

Signs of an all-round decline rapidly set in and the Emperor and the empire though shrouded in pompous magnificence lost all vitality and became rotten to the core. In the hour of adversity, they lost even common prudence so that when the governor of Kabul reported the threat of an invasion, Khan-i-Dauran poured contempt and scorn on his baseless fears. When he reminded the government that the salary of the soldiers had been in arrears for the last five years, he received either no reply or an evasive answer that money would be sent to him as soon as the Bengal treasure arrived. But it was never realized that money must be sent. The result was that

the province of Kabul became utterly unprotected, disorganised and despondent.

Just then, threatening clouds began to gather on the north-western frontier. The Safawis had failed to defend their empire against Afghan pressure and they began by dispossessing the Shah of Qandhar. Their leader Mahmud next marched against Ispahan the capital and occupied it in 1722. Muhmud's successor Ashraf was dispossessed by Nadir Quli in 1729, who thus became the new ruler of Persia. Nadir Quli had been born in the family of a Turkoman of Khorasan in 1688. He had a stormy career in his youth. In 1727, he occupied Nishapur and drove out the Afghans from that region. He was therefore acclaimed by the Persians as their saviour. He made his first appearance as a rising military leader but he was something more than a mere soldier. He had the wonderful gift of correctly appraising the situation and turning it to his advantage. He also had a genius for administration and winning the confidence of his people. On the one hand, therefore, he provided for good government in the region under his control and on the other acknowledged the Safawid Prince Shah Tahmasp as his overlord and started a war of liberation against the Afghans as his commander-in-chief. Within two years, the whole of Persia was liberated and Shah Tahmasp became its ruler. The Shah gratefully shared the kingdom with Nadir and allowed him to rule over half of Persia as a sovereign prince with a right to issue coins in his own name.

Nadir now launched on a career of conquest. He secured the extension of Persian territory at the expense of Turkey, Arabia and Russia. But he showed no unseemly haste to depose the Shah for the unification of Persia under himself. Even when the Shah was deposed in 1732, he refused to step into his shoes and ruled only as the regent of his son. This added to his popularity and prestige. In 1736, the Safawid Prince died. In the absence of any other claimant to the throne, he now accepted the crown and assumed the style of Nadir Shah.

Nadir Shah now decided to invade India and Afghanistan. He first turned his attention towards the Afghans rulers of Qandahar and with a view to isolate them entered into correspondence with the Mughal Emperor. He desired the Emperor to post his men on the Kabul frontier so that Afghan fugitives might find no shelter there. Another object in sending his envoys was to find out the exact position of conditions in India so that he might adjust his policy accordingly. Twice did the Emperor assure him that he had made adequate arrangements to prevent entry into Kabul of enemies of Nadir Shah. But

Rise of Nadir
Shah

Causes of invading
India

he did absolutely nothing. When Nadir Shah launched his offensive against Qandahar, a number of Afghans fled towards Kabul and Ghazni. Since Nadir Shah had instructed his soldiers not to violate Indian territory, they refrained from pursuing the fugitives inside Indian territory. It was wrong not to have deputed an army at the frontier after making a solemn promise to that effect. It could be interpreted as friendliness to the enemies of Nadir Shah. Notwithstanding that, he did not want to draw any fortuitous conclusions. He therefore sent a fresh envoy to demand from the Emperor an explanation as to why he had not respected his engagements. The Emperor neither gave any satisfactory explanation nor allowed the envoy to return speedily to his master. Nadir made this the excuse for invading India.

Before setting foot on Indian soil, he secured full information about the conditions obtaining in this country. Almost all the principal *amirs* had addressed him letters expressive of their good-will and had invited him to invade the land. He was therefore convinced beforehand that he would not have to encounter any serious opposition.

He had also heard of the fabulous wealth of India which had been accumulating in Delhi and Agra for generations together. A successful invasion would bring him all this hoarded wealth.

Besides, he was anxious to extend the frontiers of his kingdom to the Indus and, in order to perpetuate his hold over this region, he thought it desirable to destroy all possibility of an Indian counter-attack. He was therefore anxious to inspire such wholesome fear and awe in the mind of the Indian sovereign that he may never dare contemplate retaliation.

Nadir Shah kept up the pretence of friendliness towards the Indian monarch and of his anxiety only to punish the Afghan fugitives. Ghazni, Jalalabad and Peshawar were easily occupied. He refrained from oppressing the Mughal subjects but all hostile elements were ruthlessly massacred. His envoy was killed near Jalalabad. This infuriated him so much that he ordered a general massacre on reaching the place. This sent a thrill of horror and fear among the people. But he was in no hurry to come to India and proceeded slowly and safely after making due arrangements for the administration of the conquered territory and defence of his line of communication.

After subjugating Afghanistan, he entered the Punjab. Zakariya Khan tried to hold up his advance but negligence on the part of the Emperor made it impossible for him to continue resistance for long. He therefore made his submission and Nadir Shah won him over by appointing him to govern

Punjab on his behalf. Just then, he appointed governors for Kabul and Kashmir as well. Having made all these arrangements, he proceeded towards Delhi.

Muhammad Shah had learnt of the fall of Kabul in July 1738, but even till the following January, he made no arrangements for the defence of the Punjab.

The battle of Karnal (Feb 1739). Aid was solicited from Rajputs, Afghans and Marathas, but nobody seemed to have any interest in this enterprise. An army of 80,000 soldiers was, however, collected. Nizam-ul-mulk, Saadat Khan, Qamaruddin and Khan-i-Dauran accompanied by the Emperor himself advanced as far as Karnal where they encamped. Despite opposition by others, Saadat Khan led a premature attack without adequate preparations. Khan-i-Dauran rode forth in his support. Thereupon the Emperor and the rest of the Indian army also got ready for an attack. But it had neither a plan of action nor an agreed leader. An experienced and gifted general like Nadir Shah, therefore, took no time in worsting it. The battle of Karnal lasted only for three hours. Saadat Khan fell a prisoner while Khan-i-Dauran was mortally wounded and soon died.

Nadir Shah had not expected such an easy success. He tried to elicit information from Saadat Khan but when he suspected him of giving an exaggerated account of the power of the Emperor, he appealed to him for help as a Persian and a Shia. Saadat was fooled by this trick and gave out that a treaty could be negotiated if Nizam-ul-mulk were called to his camp.

Nadir Shah therefore summoned Nizam-ul-mulk for an audience. He interrogated him in order to form an estimate of the power of the Emperor. He asked him why despite the presence of brave men like him the Marathas were able to lead their raids upto Delhi. Nizam-ul-mulk plainly told him that factions among the nobles had caused such confusion that he had himself gone away to Deccan in disgust. Nadir Shah was, therefore, convinced that he would have to undertake no further fighting. More than two years had already elapsed since his departure from Persia. He was, therefore, anxious to come to terms with the Emperor to facilitate his early return to Persia. It was finally agreed that the Emperor should pay him 50 lakhs of rupees, 20 lakhs immediately and the remaining 30 lakhs in three equal instalments of ten lakhs, payable at Lahore, Attock and Kabul respectively.

Everybody felt relieved at the prospect of Nadir Shah's early withdrawal. But just then Khan-i-Dauran died. He is said to have gained consciousness just before he died. Saadat's treason finally expired. He found the Emperor, the Wazir and Nizam-ul-mulk by his side. He is said to have told

them that his career was at an end but he appealed to them never to take the Emperor to Nadir Shah or Nadir Shah to Delhi. They must see that he went back from Karnal itself. Things had fortunately been arranged likewise. But the Irani and Turani nobles of the Emperor were so mean and selfish that they started quarrelling for the Khan-i-Dauran's post of *Mir Bakhshi* even before Nadir Shah had departed. At this time the senior most and most influential member at court was Nizam-ul-mulk. Hence the office of *Mir Bakhshi* was offered to him. This made Saadat so indignant that he went to Nadir Shah and told him that he must be a great simpleton if he went away with only 50 lakhs of rupees, for if he went to Delhi he could easily secure at least 20 crores of rupees in cash and jewellery.

On learning this, Nadir Shah summoned Nizam-ul-mulk to another interview and told him that as long as he did not pay 20 crores of rupees he would not be allowed to leave the camp. He humbly submitted that even in the best days of the Empire there had never been a hoard of 20 crores in the royal treasures while at this time the Emperor was finding it difficult to collect even twenty lakhs. But he was adamant. The next day, the Emperor was summoned and he too was detained. Before the Emperor's departure for Nadir's camp some people had proposed war but the army had been starving for the last four or five days because all reserves in the camp had been exhausted and the soldiers of Nadir had sealed off all supplies from outside. War was therefore out of the question. Nadir Shah detained the principal amirs and members of the royal family as well.

Nadir Shah now decided to go to Delhi and while the final terms of peace were still under negotiation there was a brawl between Nadir's troops and the local corn-dealers. This took a violent turn and thousands of Persian soldiers were killed. When Nadir Shah was informed of this, he ordered an enquiry to find out the centres of opposition and on ascertaining them ordered a general massacre in those localities. 20,000 people lost their lives and the sword of retribution was sheathed only on the Emperor tendering a personal apology. Nadir Shah assumed the imperial title of Shahanshah, minted coins in his name and ordered the inclusion of his name in the *Khutba*. He also issued *farmans* bearing his signature to Shahu and Bajirao.

The Emperor agreed to cede him all lands west of the Indus. In return for this he himself placed a Crown on the head of Muhammad Shah and directed that in future the name of the latter alone should figure in *Sikka* the *Khutba* and the *farmans*. He then held a durbar at Delhi and advised the nobles to act according to the wishes of Muhammad Shah. He then returned to his country laden with a vast booty consisting of 15 crores of

Nadir Shah's
retreat to Persia

rupees and much other valuable property. The governor of the Punjab agreed to send him 20 lakhs of rupees a year. The victorious conqueror, besides, carried with him many skilled artisans as well.

Nadir Shah's invasion reduced to dust the dignity of the Emperor. He had to live as a prisoner in his own capital and had to be a helpless spectator to the sufferings of his people under his very nose. His name was removed from the *sikka* and the *Khutba*. His nobles emulated each other in servile flattery of the foreigner and thus gave proof of their utter moral bankruptcy. Nadir Shah spent about two months at Delhi in revelry and dance but none of the provincial governors marched up with his forces to vindicate the honour of his sovereign. The imperial throne, the precious jewels and the entire hoarded treasure was lost. Lands beyond the *Indus* passed under the direct control of Nadir Shah while Zakariya Khan, the governor of the Punjab was no longer a servant of the Emperor but a vassal chief of Nadir Shah under obligation to pay him an annual tribute of 20 lakhs. Thus the Punjab was also lost to the empire

After his return from India, Nadir Shah's public conduct showed signs of definite deterioration. He became more ruthless, suspicious and tyrannical. Hence rebellions started and in 1747 he was assassinated. The death of Nadir Shah paved the ground for the rise of Ahmad Khan Abdali.

Ahmad Khan Abdali was an Afghan by birth and had formerly belonged to the personal staff of Nadir Shah. When after the conquest of Qandahar, Nadir Shah decided to settle all his Abdali subjects there, the kith and kin of Ahmad Khan also settled there. Nadir Shah was highly pleased with Ahmad Khan and used to say that he had come across no man in Persia, India or Transoxiana who could equal Ahmad Khan in ability and moral qualities. The murderers of Nadir Shah desired to make a clean sweep of all his Afghan retainers as well. But Ahmad Khan Abdali got scent of their designs and took precautions for their safety. All the Afghans now proceeded towards Qandahar and chose Ahmad as their leader and began to address him as Ahmad Shah. On reaching Qandahar, they had to fight against the local garrison but the fort soon passed under their control. Ahmad Shah now had himself crowned and issued coins bearing his name.

Ahmad Shah thought that as an Afghan he could count on the support of the Afghans. He therefore had it proclaimed that he wanted to revive the sovereignty of the Afghans and would be happy to enrol in his army all those who wished to cooperate in the

Occupies Ghazni,
Kabul and
Peshawar

realization of this aim. The result was that within a very short period the number of his soldiers swelled up to 50,000. He now occupied the whole of Afghanistan. The officers of Nadir Shah at Kabul, Ghazni and Peshawar either made no resistance or only in a half-hearted manner. He was therefore able to occupy all those places adding fresh laurels to his glory and morale to his troops.

He now crossed the *Indus* and the *Jhelum* to invade the Punjab. Lahore and Sarhind were occupied but the imperial army inflicted a defeat on him near Sarhind and he was forced to retire to his own country. The main cause of the success of the imperialists was the fact that they out-numbered the enemy by 5 to 1. But they lacked the courage to give the enemy a pursuit, being satisfied merely with his retreat.

But Ahmad Shah was not the man to be easily quieted. He therefore led another invasion in 1749. Muin Khan was at that time the governor of the Punjab. He resisted the advance of Abdali and asked for reinforcements. But when he received no help from there he came to terms with him by promising to pay him an annual tribute of 14 lakhs of rupees. Thus Ahmad Shah acquired sovereignty over the Punjab.

Abdali then led a third invasion in 1751. The governor of the Punjab again received no help. Hence there was none to bar the progress of the invader. He now sent his envoy to the Emperor to demand Lahore and Multan and as the latter had no power to resist him he conceded his demand. Abdali conquered Kashmir too just about this time and appointed a governor to carry on its government. He then went back again because he learnt that Safdarjang, the *Nawab-Wazir* of Awadh was negotiating a treaty with the Marathas in order to employ them against Abdali in the Punjab. As a result of the arrangement made during this campaign Abdali was assured of an income from the Punjab of 50 lakhs rupees a year. This suggests that his hold over the Punjab was far more thorough than that of Nadir Shah.

Ahmad Shah Abdali left the government of the Punjab in the hands of Muin Khan and when he died his son was appointed the governor and his wife Mughalani Begam was appointed the regent of the boy-governor. But Mughalani Begam's conduct created discontent in many quarters and some people tried to set her aside in order to gain their own ends. This led to general lawlessness in the Punjab and the Sikhs increased the tempo of their attacks. In order to restore order and peace,

Abdali sent an army but when it failed in its objective he himself started for India once again in November 1756.

He had come determined to occupy Delhi and was accompanied by his son Timur Shah and his ablest lieutenant Jahan Khan. Lahore and Sarhind were occupied and Mughalani Begam threw in her lot with him. The Raja of Kashmir agreed to pay tribute. On hearing of his advance, the Emperor sought to provide for some defence but nobody came to his rescue. The Jats, the Marathas and the Rana of Mewar all alike kept quiet for fear of the might of Abdali. He now entered the capital, lavished great praise on Mughalani Begam and promised to assign to her the government of Jalandhar Doab, Jammu and Kashmir. She in turn supplied him all information about the capital. She told him who was opulent, who had secret treasures and where, which business community was particularly rich and which families had peerless young beauties. Acting on her information, beautiful young women were seized, secret treasures were dug out and everyone was deprived of his wealth and honour. Even the Emperor did not escape his oppressive hand. He was driven out of the palace and lodged in dilapidated quarters. His daughter was married to Timur Shah and Muhammad Shah's young daughter whom the Emperor wanted to marry himself was sent to the embraces of the boorish old conqueror. Considering the age, appearance and race of Abdali, the proposed demand for marriage with Muhammad Shah's daughter was grossly improper. All efforts to dissuade him from such an outrageous resolve failed. He was deaf to all appeals and entreaties. Abdali had hoped to obtain a very rich booty but when that was not forthcoming even in spite of the methods detailed above, he led a raid to Mathura, Mahaban and Gokul, plundering everywhere he went. He then returned to his country with an immense booty laden on 28,000 mules and camels.

Before his departure from Delhi, he compelled the Emperor to cede to him Kashmir, Lahore, Sarhind and Multan. He appointed his son Timur Shah to supervise the government of these regions and adequate subordinate staff was provided. Mughalani Begam was refused both Kashmir and Jalandhar Doab and had to suffer great mortification and indignities. Her failure to pay the dues of a person for whom she had been surety was punished with imprisonment, caning and disgrace. Her treason thus did not go altogether unpunished. But other traitors were not equally unlucky. Abdali appointed Najib Khan Rohilla as *Mir Bakhshi* and he continued to hold the capital as an agent of Abdali.

On Abdali's return, things rapidly changed once again. Raghunath Rao, Sakharam Babu, Malhar Rao Holkar and other Maratha leaders made their appearance and the Emperor and the *Wazir* disgusted with the conduct of Najib Khan were eager to go to any length in order to secure their aid against him. Sakharam entered the Doab and drove out Najib's agents from there. Raghunath Rao proceeded from Rajputana to Delhi. The debt of the *Peshwa* was increasing and he had to realize from the Emperor the annual grant of 13 lakhs of rupees and past arrears for the maintenance of 5000 troops for the imperial service. Sakharam reported that there was such widespread lawlessness in the Doab that it was difficult to raise any revenue from there. Hence the Marathas were themselves interested in going to Delhi and establishing their supremacy there.

Najib Khan prepared for a defensive war from inside the fort of Delhi but he had to sue for peace due to lack of supplies. Raghunath Rao now indulged in a series of blunders upto 1758 which brought no gains to the Marathas but incurred for them the violent hostility of Abdali and Najib Khan. Malhar Rao was on good terms with Najib Khan and he was conscious of his merits. The siege of Delhi also furnished proof of it. He was therefore of opinion that he should not be antagonised and should be allowed to retain his post of *Mir Bakhshi*. Najib himself suggested that if the Marathas allied themselves with him, he would induce Abdali to come to a peaceful settlement with the Marathas in regard to their mutual spheres of influence. This would have been beneficial to both parties. But Raghunath Rao would have no truck with him.

Najib Khan was therefore obliged to leave Delhi along with all his men and Ahmad Bangash was appointed *Mir Bakhshi* in his place. He was also deprived of a large part of his *jagir*. In such circumstances it was but natural that he should complain to Abdali about it, and ask for a fresh invasion by him. Without pondering over the consequences of such a contingency, the Marathas seized Sarhind and Lahore in March-April 1758 and extended their authority upto Attock. But they made no arrangements for sealing the frontiers of Punjab or strong garrisoning river ferries and military outposts lying on the way of the invader. Adina Beg whom Abdali particularly hated was appointed the governor and he agreed to pay 75 lakh rupees a year.

When Abdali learnt all this, he was besides himself with rage and decided to lead a fifth invasion into India specially for the chastisement of the Marathas. He sent his general Jahan Khan. Adina Beg had in the meantime died and Dattaji Sindhia had appointed Sabaji as his successor in defe-

rence to the wishes of the *Peshwa* to take the Punjab under direct Maratha control. Sabaji defeated Jahan Khan but when Abdali came up at the head of a fresh army Sabaji lacked the means to resist him. He therefore ordered the commandants of Lahore, Multan and Sarhind to fall back on Delhi and he himself also retreated and formed a junction with Dattaji.

Thus during the closing months of 1759 Punjab once more reverted to Abdali and was never to return to mughal authority again. Abdali's dispositions of 1757 had all been upset and he had vowed vengeance and retribution against a long list of people. His greatest grievance was against the Marathas who had humiliated his deputy Najib Khan and had sought to put an end to his political authority in India. They had sided with the murderer of his ally Emperor Alamgir and had driven out his son from the Punjab. He had a grievance against the Emperor too because he had dismissed a person appointed by him and allied himself with the Marathas against him. But he had already been murdered. The *Wazir* was in fact a worse offender than even the Marathas because it was he who had invited them, had secured the dismissal of Najib Khan, and executed the murder of Alamgir II.

Abdali was so impatient to punish all these people and particularly the Marathas that he rushed into the Doab without waiting to complete arrangements for government of the Punjab or suppressing the Sikh insurgents. His first encounter was with Dattaji Sindhia who was worsted and killed. Malhar Rao now proposed to distract the enemy by vigorous guerilla raids against him but Afghan wheeling parties trapped him in a ring and it was with difficulty that he could extricate himself from their grip.

Informed of these reverses, the *Peshwa* ordered Sadashiva Rao Bhau, the victor of Udgir to proceed to the north. He sent with him his son Vishwas Rao and many other Maratha generals of repute. Sadashiva Rao Bahu comes to the north (1760) Jankoji Sindhia, Malhar Rao Holkar, Govind Ballal and other Maratha leaders in the north were directed to act under the command of Sadashiva Rao and to so exert themselves as may lead to the speedy expulsion of the invader.

At the same time the *Peshwa* kept writing to his agents in the north that they should collect sufficient money for the maintenance of the army in the north and payment of his debts in the south. In this connection, he constantly urged raising of money from whatever sources by whatever methods possible and particularly refers to Jats, Rajputs, the *Wazir* and the Nawab of Bengal. This reveals the principal weakness of

the Maratha army. To hope for success without providing for supplies was mere moonshine. But the Marathas had a silly notion of conquering an empire purely by borrowings. Ahmad Shah was no stranger to the land and had first-hand knowledge of local conditions. He could count on the support of Najib Khan and because of the latter's personal influence and the awe inspired by Abdali, Shujauddaula, the Nawab of Awadh and Rohilla chiefs Hafiz Rahmat, Sadullah and Bundi joined him, while the Jats and the Rajputs remained neutral. Sadasiva Rao had no acquaintance with the north and had no personal contacts with Holkar or Sindhia. It was therefore difficult for him to act in perfect unison with them. The *Peshwa* sent him no money and his troops were in such a sorry state of affairs due to lack of funds that they had often to go without meals. Maratha tax-collectors in the north were unable to realize anything because of the utter political confusion prevailing there. His position was, therefore, deteriorating day by day. Despite all this, he did not lose confidence or patience and occupied Delhi.

Ahmad Shah had no desire to establish direct government over India. He coveted only the Punjab, Sindh and Kabul which were already under his possession. From the

Proposals for peace rest of the territory he demanded an annual tribute of 40 lakh rupees to be collected by the *Wazir* from the local Rajas and to be sent to him in Kabul. He did not want to destroy the power of the Marathas. The only thing he desired was that they should come to a definite and permanent understanding with the Emperor so that northern India may have peace and taxes may be regularly collected. He therefore started negotiations for peace through the mediation of Najib Khan, Hafiz Rahmat Khan and Shujauddaula. If Bhau had a free hand, he might have accepted the advice of Holkar and Surajmal Jat and peace could have been concluded. But the *Peshwa* was constantly urging him to retain control over Delhi and the Punjab. This appeared fantastic not only to Abdali but even to Surajmal who was alienated by insistence of such demands.

Under such circumstances, war became inevitable. If the Maratha finances had been sound, victory might not have been impossible because Abdali could not have stayed on in India indefinitely. Maratha occupation of Delhi had raised their credit in the eyes of the people. It was therefore not impossible that the Indian allies of Abdali could have gravitated towards them and the Jats and the Rajputs might have actively supported them. Just then came reports that Abdali's troops were also experiencing the pinch for want of funds and supplies and were eager to return home. But financial bankruptcy of the Marathas rendered their success impossible.

The third battle of Panipat (January 1761)

The were thus obliged to march out of the capital. Abdali was in favour of a quick decision one way or the other. He therefore advanced to meet Bhan half-way and the two forces came face to face at the historic battle-field of Panipat. Even now neither dared take the initiative so that for another two months or so fighting was confined to mere skirmishes. During this period, the position of the Marathas continued to deteriorate still further while that of Abdali gradually improved.

Finally in January 1761 a decisive battle was fought because Abdali's troops were opposed to accepting Bhau's terms for peace. Qazi Idris delivered the *fatwa* of *jihad* and warned them against the wrath of Allah in case of any remissness to duty. In course of the fight the matchlockmen under Ibrahim Khan Gardi and the personal followers of Bhau particularly distinguished themselves and they smashed up the ranks of Abdali's right and centre. But Abdali had his eagle's eye on the entire front and was acting according to a predetermined plan. Hence he was always able to reinforce the weak spots on his own side and to take the maximum advantage in the best possible manner of any slackening on the part of the Marathas.

The result was that the Marathas were decisively beaten. Sadashiva Rao Bhau, Vishwas Rao, Jaswant Rao Pawar, Tukoji Sindhia, Santaji Bagh, and Jankoji were killed. Ibrahim Khan Gardi was captured and killed. Antaji Manekeshwar was killed in course of flight while Shamsheer Bahadur died of the effects of his wounds. The carnage was dreadful, and as Sarkar has said, a whole generation of leaders was wiped off at one stroke.

The defeat of the Marathas was due neither to the weakness of their soldiers nor the timidity of their generals. Abdali himself admitted "The enemy too distinguished themselves and fought so well that it was beyond the capacity of other races.....Those dauntless blood-shedders did not fall short in fighting and doing glorious deeds." The causes of their defeat lay elsewhere. Sadashiva Rao though a brave and capable leader lacked the maturity and experience of Abdali. Nor was he aware of the tactics followed in foreign lands. One of the principal reasons of Abdali's success was his superior strategy and novel tactics. Secondly, the Marathas generally used no protective armour while a vast majority of Abdali's troops had this advantage. Thirdly, the Marathas had neither an adequate force of matchlockmen nor a good supply of quality horses or seasoned troopers. The absence of Dattaji from this fateful fight was a serious handicap to the Marathas. Fourthly, the Marathas had suffered terribly for want of food and adequate

Causes of the Success
of Abdali

clothing. Starved and barebacked in the bitter cold of January many of them fell sick or even died. Their opponents on the contrary had no such handicaps. The short-sighted policy of the Marathas had made Jats and the Rajputs their enemies and they commanded no love or respect among the people in the north. Thus they failed to secure the support of their own countrymen in their own homeland while Abdali was supported by the Nawab of Awadh and the Rohilla Afghans.

This battle exercised a tremendous influence on the fortunes of the Emperor and the Marathas. The Marathas received a shock from which they could never fully recover and they never regained the position of vantage which they had secured in 1760.

Importance of the Battle
The plight of the Emperor became more miserable than ever. Since 1759, Ali Gauhar, the son of Alamgir II had been calling himself Emperor Shah Alam but he got a chance of entering Delhi only in 1772 because after Abdali's departure Najib Khan held authority at Delhi as Najibuddaula and denied Shah Alam the right of admission into the capital. Abdali annexed Punjab and Sindh to his dominions. Before his departure he recognized Shah Alam as the Emperor, Imad as the *Wazir* and Najibuddaula as the *Mir Bakhshi*. As a result of this invasion, Punjab and Sindh were lost to the empire; Rajputs and Jats became completely independent and the provincial governors became more defiant and disrespectful. It destroyed the dignity of the Emperor root and branch, what little that still remained as the personal *jagir* of the Emperor was seized by Najibuddaula and the members of the imperial family became dependent for even their bare necessities on the mercy of the usurper. The glory and majesty of the Great Mughals had made room for abject misery and utter frustration.

Further Readings

1. Elliot and Dowson—*History of India*, Vol. VIII.
2. Sykes—*History of Persia*.
3. Sarkar—*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vols. I & II.
4. Irvine—*Later Mughals* (Ed. by Sarkar) Vol. II, Chapters. XI—XII.
5. Sinha—*Rise of the Sikh Power*.
6. Sardesai—*New History of the Marathas*, Vol. II. Chapter. VII and XVII-XXI.

CHAPTER XX

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

The foundation of the Timurid dynasty in India synchronised with revolutionary changes in the national as well as the international sphere. Some of these turned out to be events of a worldwide significance while others had only a parochial or national importance. In the political sphere, a tendency to establish fully sovereign states is almost universal. There is at the same time a desire to establish national states comprising the whole of a country to serve as the nucleus of world-empires founded on usurpation of other people's independence and authority. The Timurid monarchs of India too took inspiration from these two ideals *viz.* full sovereignty and imperial unity. Thirdly, there was a spirit of superstitious reverence both in Asia and Europe towards the descendants of certain individuals who were or became legendary character. Confining our enquiry to India alone we shall first examine the working of these ideals at some length and then proceed to mention other ideals as well.

Rulers of early medieval India fought shy of calling themselves fully sovereign. This is to some extent true in the case of Rajputs because on the eve of the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni's, the Chandels, the Kalachuris and others still regarded Rajyapal as their overlord although his power had considerably declined and he lacked the means to enforce his paramountcy over them. The Sultan of Delhi and local Muhammadan dynasties regarded the Caliph dead or alive as their legal sovereign and usually used his name on the coins issued by them. This no longer applied to later medieval Indian conditions. Babar was a descendant of Timur who in 1402 had declared Samarkand as *Dar-ul-Khilafat* and himself as the Caliph of God. Since then, the Timurids had assumed an air of superiority although nominal sovereignty of a Changezkhanid prince had persisted upto the time of Abu Said, the grandfather of Babar. He put an end to this by helping Yunas Khan to the Changezkhanid throne and asserting, in one of his letters, his status as the *Padshah*. But no Timurid ruler had formally assumed the title of *Padshah* before 1507. On the contrary, they were satisfied with calling themselves merely 'Mirza' and 'Sultan'. Mirza literally meant a descendant of Timur whose constitutional status was only that of an Amir of a Mongol prince. Sultan had always signified Governor of a

province under the Caliph. Hence as long as the Timurid rulers used any or both of these appellations, they did not clearly assert their sovereignty. In 1507 Babar was the only independent Timurid ruler in Asia. He was therefore definitely superior to all Timurids then surviving. At this time powerful kingdoms were being formed in Asia under the Uzbeqs, the Safawids and the Osmanli Turks, the rulers of each of whom laid claim to full sovereignty and superiority over others. There was a time when the territory of all these kingdoms formed a part of the empire of one of Babar's ancestors. A self-respecting man like Babar, therefore, could never regard himself as in any way inferior to them. Besides it was necessary to assert his constitutional supremacy to put an end to machinations and intrigues by the Mirzas. That is why he assumed the style of *Padshah*. His son Humayun used to say that just as the sun is supreme among the stars and planets so is the king among his people. Thus he too asserted his supremacy and called himself the *Padshah*.

But Akbar made his position in this regard still more clear and precise. In 1517, the Egyptian Caliph Mutwakkil had surrendered to Salim of Turkey all symbols of Caliphate. Mecca and Medina had already been occupied by the Turks. A majority of the Sunnis in the world therefore began to look upon him as the Caliph. Babar and Humayun, respectively, had entered into such treaties with the Shah of Persia in 1510 and 1515 that the latter regarded them as his vassals. It was therefore necessary for Babar to do something beside retaining the title of *Padshah* as might indubitably proclaim to the world his sovereign status. Akbar had conquered practically the whole of northern India by 1576 by a combination of diplomatic prudence, military strength and religious toleration. In 1577, he himself recited the Khutba in imitation of the practice of later Caliphs. He initiated the practices of *sijda* (prostration) and *zaminbos* (kissing the ground in front of the royal throne). Abul Fazl trumpeted aloud the native genius of the Emperor. All this was a preparation for what was to follow in 1579. In that year, the principal *ulema* of the realm made a solemn declaration *i. e.*, *Mahzar*, in which the Emperor was spoken of as *Imam-i-Adil*, *Amirul-Mominin*, and *Mujtahid-i-Ala*. After this all his descendants regarded themselves as fully sovereign and never recognized the superiority of anyone directly or indirectly. The puppets of later days lost this prestige and Muhammad Shah not only accepted the crown from Nadir Shah but made the flattering statement that he regarded himself specially honoured among the crowned heads of the world for having received the crown and the throne from his angust hands' and in return for this high honour, he ceded to the Shah all his lands west of the Indus from Kashmir to Sindh in lieu of tribute.

But these royal faincants had become virtual prisoners in the hands of their nobles and the sovereignty of the state was

exercised by the Sayyad Brothers, the Turani leaders, Marathas, Afghans or the English. But before this decline set in, no independent Indian ruler of the 16th or 17th century ever recognized the authority of any outside power. The wars of independence initiated by Maharana Pratap and Shivaji had at their root the desire for acquiring and preserving full sovereignty.

We have noticed in the case of Sher Shah an apathy for extending the frontiers of his empire beyond the *Indus*. When Humayun had pleaded to be let alone in the Punjab, Sher Shah had told him categorically that he had left Kabul for him; he should go there. Thus he had demonstrated both by word and deed that he did not consider it necessary to go beyond the *Indus* or to seek to drive the Mughals out of Kabul, Qandahar and Ghazni. His political vision could not transcend the limits approved by early Turkish tradition or else he should have naturally desired to extend his authority over Afghanistan, the homeland of his ancestors. But Mughal ambitions were never satisfied with Indian possessions alone. They wanted to walk in the footsteps of their great ancestor Timur and to reoccupy his vast Central Asian possessions. As long as they confined their attention to Kabul and Qandahar alone, things went generally well but when they tried to go further they had to make great sacrifices as is testified by events in the reigns of Babar and Shahjahan. This however is clear, that they all entertained a desire for expansion beyond India. That is why Pandit Jagannath's tribute "Dillishwaro wa Jagdishwaro wa" (the Lord of Delhi and the Lord of the world) flattered the vanity of Shahjahan.

The history of the Marathas also reveals a lust for empire. The principal aim of Shivaji was to liberate Maharashtra and to destroy Muslim domination over the Deccan. But he too placed before the people his distant goal of liberating the whole of India from the grip of the *mlechchhas* for the preservation of cows, Brahmins and religion. A majority of the ministers of Shahu were in favour of consolidating Maratha power in the Deccan. But the desire for expansion towards the north proved irresistible even from the time of Bajirao I.

The rulers of this period described themselves as representative of God, incarnation of God or semi-divine. Thus they emphasised a divine element in their personality while the followers of Shivaji made him an incarnation itself. But even a greater importance was attached to the family of the sovereign. Babar and his descendants were ever proud of their Timurid origin and shared in the glory of his name and achievements. Humayun had specifically referred to this in one of his letters to Bahadur Shah of Gujerat. Timur always occupied a prominent place in genea-

(ii) Lust for imperialism

(iii) Dynastic loyalties

logical tables and in court histories the dynasty was described as the Timurid dynasty. Timurid tradition commanded in practice a sanctity equal to, or even greater than, that of the *Suras* of the *Quran*. Thus in practice the name of Timur always commanded great reverence.

Similarly, Maharana Pratap continued to draw inspiration from Bappa Rawal's heroic exploits, whether real or imaginary. In the history of the Sisodiyas of Mewar, Bappa Rawal enjoyed the same pre-eminence as Timur in the history of the Emperors of Delhi. Maharana Pratap had won such wide renown that when Shivaji was to be crowned in 1674, a faked genealogy was drawn up to connect him with the Sisodiyas. The present ruling dynasty of Nepal also traces its origin to the Sisodiyas of Mewar. In 1710, the rulers of Mewar, Marwar and Ambar came to an agreement which recognized the pre-eminence of the Sisodiyas among the ruling dynasties of Rajputana and provided that if among the sons of a Raja one of them should be born of a Sisodiya mother, he alone should be entitled to succeed to the throne irrespective of his age. Thus devotion to a dynasty was almost superstitious and its success was often interpreted as the result of the blood of some great ancestor flowing in its veins.

The rulers of this period generally believed in religious toleration. Shambhuji I or Jahangir were not very orthodox in their personal life. But most of the rulers had

(iv) Religious Toleration	a religious temperament and evinced due regard and reverence for the principles of their faith. But contrary to the earlier Turkish practice in India, they had respect for the views of the followers of other religions as well. Akbar adopted the policy of ' <i>Sulh-i-Kul</i> ' and Abul Fazl speaking of the duties of the monarch wrote that he acts as the helper and preserver of all religions or else he is landed into the vices of injustice and partiality. The religious policy of Aurangzeb was relatively harsh and intolerant. But he too made grants to Hindu temples and retained Hindu Rajas in the highest <i>mansabs</i> . His own son Muazzam was a Shia. He never insisted on the suppression of Shiaism in Bijapur and Golkunda although they were subordinate to his authority. Rajputs and Marathas opposed Aurangzeb but they did not oppress the Muslims. Only Ajit Singh destroyed certain mosques and banned <i>azan</i> (call for prayer) within his kingdom as a reprisal for Muslim barbarities against the Hindus during 1679-1708. Except for these two persons, all other rulers followed a policy of religious toleration. Shivaji's treatment of Muslims was so good that many of them entered his army to fight against Aurangzeb. Ibrahim Khan Gardi did not commit treason against Bhau even when convinced of the victory of Ahmad Shah Abdali. All this suggests that religious toleration was on the whole a univer-
------------------------------	--

sally approved policy. When Aurangzeb imposed *jizya* in contravention of it, even Shivaji lodged a vigorous protest on grounds of tradition, justice, duty to religion and decency. His successors sometimes tried to revive *jizya* under the influence of certain bigoted advisers but it always provoked such a vigorous opposition that they had to drop it soon after. There is no mention of any such opposition when *jizya* was first imposed by the Turkish Sultans of Delhi. This suggests that religious persecution was considered as natural in those days just as religious toleration was in later medieval age.

Another important feature of this age was that the aim of the rulers was not confined merely to maintenance of peace and extension of territory. They aimed at an all sided progress of the land. They desired that agriculture should prosper, the peasant should be happy and contented and in a position to pay the taxes regularly. Further-more, they aimed at promoting art and literature, trade and industry and at creating conditions that might provide a reasonable opportunity for all competent persons to develop their personality to the full. But they did not aim at promoting culture in its wider sense. According to their conception the marks of a cultured state were construction and layout of imposing palaces, strong forts, beautiful tombs and fine gardens; patronage of poets, philosophers, musicians and painters; doling out assistance to the learned and the teaching profession and endowment of educational institutions and imparting to the court and the capital all magnificence and pomp. But they failed to pay due attention to public education, public health, communications et cetera so that the general cultural content of the people remained low.

In the later medieval age despotic monarchy remained the usual form of government. The power of the monarch thus knew no diminution. Rather it tended to increase still further. The monarchs of this period were generally free from any sectarian bias and were predominantly motivated by political and military considerations alone. The influence of theology and theologians therefore decreased in the present age. Alauddin had based his secularism on his ignorance of the canon law. But in the reign of Akbar the theologian themselves conceded to the Emperor the right of authoritative interpretation of the canon law. This naturally enhanced his prestige. From his time again all citizens of the state, irrespective of their creed, colour or caste, were allowed a full and free enjoyment of equal civil and political rights and the leaders of the Hindus, so long regarded as enemies of the state became its servants and supporters. This fortified the strength of the monarch even more. The powers of the ministers remained more or less

as before while an indefinite law of succession based on the theoretical principle of election was sought to be replaced by a consistent tradition in favour of confining succession within the ruling family with a special bias for the eldest son. This added to the dignity of the crown. His autocracy seems to have been circumscribed only in one respect. The nobility in the early medieval period was essentially a creature of the ruling sovereign and its members depended for their appointment, promotion and tenure on the pleasure of the sovereign who often created at their coronation a new peerage which superseded most of the old incumbents. In comparison to the monarch, therefore, the nobles were too weak and possessed no customary or hereditary rights. But under the Timurids there was a change. The longevity of their rule hardened traditions and strengthened the nobility by imparting to it stability and stature of its own. Many nobles acquired special importance because of their loyalty to the throne, matrimonial alliances with the royal family and fitness for high office. It became difficult to adopt any high-handed policy towards such nobles and specially towards the Rajputs. Thus greater weight began to be attached to the advice of nobles and ministers although the constitutional privilege of the monarch to treat them as mere advisers remained unimpaired. Another offshoot of this was that unlike the royal women of the preceding age, the mothers, wives and sisters of the ruling sovereign exercised some influence on the course of government. The *harem* did not consist of mere concubines and base-born slave girls whose only function was to satisfy the baser carnal appetites of the sovereign. Many of them were highly cultured and refined and came of distinguished families whose near relations occupied high posts in the state. They had therefore a personality of their own and the elderly ladies of the royal family always exercised considerable influence on the sovereign and this was generally done in the interest of the people. Hamida Banu, Maham Anaga and Salima Begam in the reign of Akbar; Nurjahan in that of Jahangir, Jahanara in that of Shahjahan, Zinat-un-nissa in that of Aurangzeb, Jijabai in that of Shivaji, Tarabai in that of Raja Ram and Yesubai in that of Shahu exercised tremendous influence on public affairs. The work that Durgawati and Chand Bibi did as regents may serve as an index of the influence they might have otherwise exercised.

Prerogatives of the sovereign during this period became exceptional. As the head of the state, he exercised, like the Sultans of old, supreme executive, judicial, legislative, military and fiscal powers. But his special prerogatives during this period indicate his superior status. Nobody within the empire could make use of them without previous authorisation by the

Prerogatives of the sovereign

Emperor while there were some which were the exclusive privilege of the sovereign and could in no case be exercised by any other person in the state. Chief among these were the following:

- (i) *Jharokha-i-darshan*—Every morning the Emperor appeared at a balcony in the eastern wall of the Agra and Delhi forts when he was there so that his subjects assembled in the plain below might have full view of his face. Many people looked upon the sovereign as partial incarnation of God and abstained from food and drink as long as they had not had his *darshan*. They were called '*Darshaniyas*'. It began with Akbar but was discontinued by Aurangzeb because to his sense of orthodoxy it smacked of human worship.
- (ii) *Chauki and Taslim-i-chauki*—The principal nobles of the realm in attendance at court had to mount guard and go round the palace by turns. They had a number of watch guards under them and were required to offer obeisance in the direction of the palace at stated hours of the night.
- (iii) *Nagqara*—When the Emperor held court or went out, a powerful kettledrum was beaten to the accompaniment of many other musical instruments. The nobles ordinarily could not do so but specially favoured persons like Surjan Hada under Akbar were permitted to beat their own kettle-drums, subject to certain limitations.
- (iv) *Conferment of titles*—The Emperor alone could confer titles on his subordinates. Amirs and *mansabdars* could only recommend suitable persons for an award to the Emperor and the latter in his discretion could confer any title he thought fit in the light of such recommendations. When a prince turned rebellious, he made use of this prerogative as was done by Salim, Khusrau, Murad and Shuja.
- (v) *Muhar and Panja*—The Emperor alone could affix his special seal (*muhar*) and in special cases give a vermilion print of his palm (*Panja*) on the *farmans* issued by him. Nobody else could do so because they were emblems of superiority while all officials whether high or low were regarded as equals among themselves as servants of a common master.
- (vi) *Mutilation of limbs*—Blinding and cutting out of eyes, or slitting off ears and nose were forms of punishment which only the Emperor could inflict. In fact, such punishments were contrary to the law of Islam but the Emperor could afford to disregard it when past tradition was in his favour.

(vii) *Elephant-fights*—Witnessing elephant-fights was also a special prerogative of the Emperor. It was regarded as a means of entertainment but it sometimes had dangerous repercussions. Once in the reign of Akbar when there was a fight between the elephants of Salim and Khusrau, the two parties began a brawl in which the Emperor had to intervene. In the reign of Shahjahan, an elephant suddenly turned towards Aurangzeb, felled his horse and attacked him. Shuja and Jay Singh promptly came to his rescue but Dara who was at a distance failed to come up. This could be purely an accident but Aurangzeb persisted in the belief that Dara had deliberately kept away so that he might suffer death.

(viii) *Ceremonious weighing*—The Emperor had adopted the Hindu practice of *Tula-dan* (weighing against articles for charity). This could be done by anybody but the Emperor had the exclusive privilege of weighing against gold and jewels.

These prerogatives suggest that the office of the Emperor was considered highly exalted in comparison to any other office in the state and nobody was permitted to ape his manners and behaviour. Even the highest grandees in the state had to keep standing in his presence. When the Emperor wanted to show special favour to a Prince he allowed him a seat in the court just below his throne.

Contemporary chroniclers and foreign travellers relate numerous anecdotes about the Emperor's love of luxury and magnificence. A perusal of those accounts may leave the impression that the life of an emperor was full of gaiety and mirth. But nothing would be farther from the truth. Babar once wrote to Humayun that no office was more rigorous than that of the sovereign. This is borne out by the accounts of how Sher Shah, Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb spent their day from early morning to late in the night principally doing state business and snatching just a few hours for prayers, rest, meals and baths. Sometimes ministers were invited in the *Ghusalkhna* (Bath-room) for secret consultation and urgent orders.

All the emperors not excepting even the easy-going Jahangir, a notorious drunkard and opium-eater, rose before sun-rise. Some of them rose even two hours earlier than day-break and after the necessary daily duties devoted their time to prayer and meditation. Akbar repeated some holy *mantram* facing to the east and practised meditation. Jahangir repeated a sacred formula 3200 times every day. Shahjahan devoted this time to study of scriptures in addition to repetition of the name of God. After

prayers, they gave *darshan* at the balcony. Akbar and Jahangir reached there before the rising of the sun and offered salutations to it as it rose in sight. Some time was spent in transacting state business. People of all castes and classes, irrespective of rank, wealth or sex could go for the Emperor's *darshan* and submit their petitions to him. Akbar and Jahangir sometimes stayed there for as long as four hours and held reviews of troops, witnessed animal fights and transacted miscellaneous business. Shahjahan gave much less time while Aurangzeb stopped it altogether after 1669. Jahangir next took rest for two hours. Shahjahan and Aurangzeb regularly sat in the *Diwan-i-Am* just at this time while Akbar did so only occasionally. The public audience was attended by principal officers of the realm and other people. Here different departmental heads presented important papers before the Emperor who dictated his orders on them. Foreign ambassadors were also presented here. This was followed by a meeting in the *Diwan-i-Khas* attended by only the highest dignitaries and special favourites. Here only the most important matters were discussed in a secret enclave and decision taken on new policies to be adopted. This was sometimes followed by a meeting in Shah Burj where the Emperor discussed most confidential matters with one or two persons like the *Vakil* or the *Wazir*. This accounted for the whole of the morning and the forenoon. Now the Emperor retired into the palace and had his midday meal. Shahjahan used to stay there till about 3 P. M. and looked into the petitions handed in to the Empress. Jahangir spent this time witnessing animal-fights.

Almost all the Emperors sat in the *Diwan-i-Am* again from about 3 P. M. Wednesday was generally set apart only for administration of justice. Shahjahan transacted no business on Thursdays. This afternoon session lasted till the hour of evening prayer. After sunset, Akbar once again sat in Public Audience but he devoted this session almost exclusively to discussion over religious, philosophical, literary and spiritual matters. Shahjahan at this time enjoyed music and dance while attending to routine business of a light character. Shahjahan then retired into the female apartments, had his supper and prepared for sleep listening to books being read out to him.

No Emperor, other than Jahangir, ever drank in public during the day. Jahangir was by nature fond of luxury and ease. But even he had to spend a minimum of 9 to 10 hours a day, transacting business of the state. Although the Timurid Emperors had left a lot of business to the care of departmental heads, they had still to do many things of diverse types. They had to attend among other things particularly to dictating *farmanas*, replying to diplomatic correspondence, taking prompt decision

on intricate problems, making appointments, approving postings, transfers and promotions, deciding cases of punishment and reward, superintending and inspection of karkhanas, specially the work of painters and jewellers, review of soldiers and armaments, laying down policies, consideration of problems of war and peace *etc.* All the Emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb continued to discharge their functions adequately. That is why the roots of the empire went deeper and deeper and a sentiment of unbounded devotion to the sovereign became stronger and stronger. Only Jahangir had been a little lax but the deficiency was made good by the exertions of Nurjahan.

This age produced a number of distinguished sovereigns who left an indelible mark on the history of this land. Chief

Principal monarchs among them are Akbar, Shahjahan, Aurangzeb, of the later medieval Shivaji and Maharana Pratap. The activities age and their role in of the last two were confined within a portion medieval politics.

of India, no doubt, but their glorious deeds have won for them a lasting place in the hearts of Indians and they acquired a fame out of all proportion to the territorial limits of their respective kingdoms. The first three represent three different types among the Timurid Emperors of this country.

Among these Akbar occupies the first place not only in point of time but also in respect of the measure of his greatness.

He was a great genius endowed with such clear insight into public affairs that he could easily fix upon the right mode and psychological moment of doing a thing. His farsighted vision unfolded to him the course events must take and his practical wisdom enabled him to mould his policy accordingly. He was such an excellent judge of men that his choice of his principal officers was invariably justified. As a statesman, he was brilliant and impartial and had such a keen insight into human nature that he could always discern other people's motives and knew how to use them in the best interests of the land. His exuberance of sympathy and good will in no way compromised his imperial dignity and high status. He threw careers open to talent and picked up men of ability from all classes and creeds and unhesitatingly adopted the means necessary for securing their best services to the land and people. In bodily vigour, courage, physical prowess and self-confidence he was head and shoulders above his followers and lieutenants so that his pre-eminence among them was indubitable and unchallenged. Many a time, he hurled himself against powerful enemies at the head of a mere handful of men and when surrounded by an enemy on all sides, extricated himself by deeds of unprecedented valour and heroism. His physical strength was so great that Adham Khan was felled by a single blow of his fist and on another occasion when he held Man Singh by the neck in his

iron grip in a paroxysm of rage and intoxication, the nobles had to use a knife when all other methods had failed in order to save the Raja from death by strangulation. He rarely undertook a thing he could not achieve. He did not allow his passions or emotions to get the better of him. Instead he exhibited them as he thought best with perfect mastery over them. It is on this ground that he has been described as a past master in dissimulation who did not let anybody discern his true intentions and acted as the exigency of the moment demanded.

It was because of these qualities that he secured such remarkable success in building up the Timurid Empire in India. His father was a Sunni while his mother was a Shia but both of them had certain sufistic leanings. He was born under the roof of a Rajput and his early years were spent in the company of teachers whose views were as liberal as their learning was profound. His breadth of vision and latitudinarian tendencies were largely the gift of this peculiar environment that went to the making of Akbar. As remarked by Abul Fazl, the Emperor had an inborn versatile genius which enabled him to play the diverse roles of a general, diplomat, administrator, art-critic, spiritual guide and empire-builder with equal distinction. In the sphere of government, he introduced many far-reaching changes. He first placed before himself the ideal of setting up a national in place of a sectional or communal monarchy and intent on the progress and happiness of all sections of his people provided them an opportunity to offer their services in the interests of the Indian people. Wherever necessary, he drafted foreigners into his service but not at the cost of the people of the land. He found the unlimited *Vakil* detrimental to public security and therefore drastically, though gradually, cut down his powers and kept the office vacant for a number of years. He gave a fresh orientation to the Rajput and religious policies of the state, made great improvements in the land-revenue policy, reorganised the army on a new basis, cut down the powers of the *Sadr-i-Jahan* and appointed subordinate *Sadrs* in the provinces who in their turn were regrouped and reorganised on a scientific basis, and made the provincial *diwan* directly responsible to the central *Wazir*. For proper supervision and control over provinces, he extended Sher Shah's system of *Dak-chaukis* and appointed civil and secret staff for sending periodical reports to the centre at specified intervals. He improved the agency of control and supervision over state factories, royal stores and treasuries and evinced such sympathy and interest in the work of artists and craftsmen of different grades and categories that they made great strides in their respective arts and crafts. In the field of architecture, he evolved a new style while his patronage of painting led to the revival of an Indian School of painting.

He created conditions for a harmonious blending of Hindu and Muslim cultures and sought to generate among all classes of people feelings of mutual toleration and cordiality. He thus helped to build up a new environment, a progressive outlook and a comprehensive vision. He left his stamp on the entire government and life of the nation and the influence of his policy has survived even to the present day. For his descendants he left behind an ideal, adherence to which brought them success and popularity as surely as the neglect of it led to their failure and decline. That is why he has been called great and his name is remembered with respect and honour.

Shahjahan, the grandson of Akbar also left behind a lasting impression on the minds of the people of India. He had earned great renown as a prince and during the reign of his father secured unprecedented honour and glory. Ambition, industry and courage, high, generalship and great magnificence had become the part and parcel of his life. In comparison to his father, he was more orthodox and spent longer hours in prayers and study of scriptures. Upto the age of 24, he had never touched wine and never married more than three wives. He had a special fondness for literature, music and architecture and at the same time was able to keep his subordinates under proper control. Hence, considering his charming appearance, high talent and glorious achievement he seemed to be particularly worthy to succeed his father.

But he had certain defects which came into light after his accession to the throne. He had no moral scruples in securing his objective and could stoop to any length in order to satisfy his ambition. He therefore had no qualms of conscience in murdering Khusrav, seeking the assistance of the Shah of Persia and Malik Ambar against his father and ordering a general massacre of all possible rivals to the throne. His vanity at times engendered in him the fond belief that he could have a place in the sun and at others made him so taciturn as if others were mere flies. He had a natural propensity for pomp and show, grandeur and magnificence, and he loved to cover himself with choicest clothes and most precious ornaments. These naturally led to sensualism and fondness for luxury. His devotion to his faith led him into destruction of temples and forcible conversions, zealous conformity to hours of prayer and regular study of scriptures till late in the night. But it could not restrain him from enjoyment of music and dance which gave rise to grave scandals of debauchery and dissipation. His sense of morality seems to have been much weaker than that of his father because the latter at least observed the limits of decency and made no parade of his religiosity. But if there be even a grain of truth in what foreign travellers have written about Shahjahan's private life, his conduct would appear consistent neither with his high dignity nor a sense of decency.

Shahjahan
(1628-1658)

As a ruler, he was neither a great conqueror nor a notable reformer. During his reign, taxes became heavier, *jagirs* became cheaper, famines more frequent and bribery and corruption a recognized mode of public conduct. A dispassionate view of his private and public life as a ruler leaves an impression that his sufferings during 1658-1666 were largely an atonement for his past sins and Aurangzeb was forced by circumstances to inflict them on him.

Shahjahan's claim to fame rests largely on his magnificence and wealth. He wanted to attain unprecedented glory. Therefore he held a paternal attitude towards his subjects and tried to keep them happy and contented. This had made him popular among his people. In order to spread his fame far and wide, he tastefully decorated every inch of his surroundings and spared no expense to make them most colourful and magnificent. When he held a special *darbar* or when foreign ambassadors were presented at court he appeared in his best costumes and most expensive jewellery so that he seemed to combine the majesty of *Indra* with the wealth of *Kuber*. The result was that tales of his inexhaustible wealth and priceless collection of pearls and diamonds became current in the whole of Asia and Europe. With the same object in view he sent large sums of money to the Sherif of Mecca and other holy places for distribution among the poor. The 'Peacock-throne' and his ornate buildings of exquisite design and great expense were in tune with the same spirit. He made prolific use of white marble and adorned his buildings with such excellent *pictra dura* work that it has been likened to the art of the painter and jeweller. Shahjahan's wealth and magnificence, exquisite beauty of his structures and concern for the welfare of his people have imparted a unique personality to Shahjahan. But his passions and prejudices as indicated above gradually led to dismemberment of the empire. The ultimate failure of Aurangzeb was largely a part of his inheritance.

Aurangzeb was in many respects different from his father and great-grandfather although he shared with them certain common features. Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb were all personally bold, courageous and gifted commanders. Nor were they lacking in perseverance and valour. They all loved the company of men of learning and possessed royal dignity, high intelligence and gravity of temper. But while Akbar was liberal and tolerant, Aurangzeb considered it his solemn duty to follow the principles of his faith rigorously. Akbar tried to adjust his policy to political exigencies of the time while Aurangzeb sought to create an environment suited to his policy. Akbar took great delight in fundamental spiritual problems but while his environ-

Aurangzeb
(1658-1707)

ment led him to adopt the policy of *Sulh-i-Kul* and harmonious development of all religions, Aurangzeb's Sunni orthodoxy and the prevailing atmosphere at court obliged him to adopt a policy of religious persecution against the non-Muslims. Both Akbar and Shahjahan took a lively interest in the pleasures of life and works of art. But Aurangzeb was a man of a different mould altogether. He wanted to abide by the principles of Islam and entertained a wholesome fear of the wrath of God. His letters repeatedly keep reminding of the Day of Judgment, the wrath of God and the approaching death. That is why he never took more than four wives nor indulged in romance outside the four corners of marriage. He tried to live a scrupulously spotless life so that his conduct might make him appear a true representative of God. It is said that he had once agreed to sip wine on the insistence of Hirabai when she would accept no excuses, but fortunately for him the lady herself snatched away the cup just before it touched his lips because she was intent on testing the strength of his affections for her and not leading him into the path of vice and sin. It is agreed on all hands that like Akbar Aurangzeb also was a past-master in concealing his true intentions. Maybe he too was probing the sentiments of Hirabai, trying to find out whether with feminine insistence she would unreasonably stick to her position or whether she would finally relent and respect his sentiments against the use of wine. If she had not given in till the very end, he himself might have thrown away the cup after keeping it for sometime close to his lips because he had the grit and firmness to sacrifice everything to duty. Aurangzeb was simple to the extreme in respect of dress, diet and general mode of life and scrupulously avoided all contact with music and dancing. He used no ornaments except a large diamond as a symbol of his royalty.

Sarkar has lavished high praise on his personal character and has said that considering his honesty, industry, impartiality and sense of justice he would have made 'an excellent departmental head.' Some people have expressed the view that if he had been the ruler of a Muslim country he would have proved an ideal monarch. His puritanical life and transparent piety was in keeping with the noblest traditions of Khilafat and had earned for him the title of '*Zinda Pir*.' Aurangzeb was humble, courteous and urbane in speech, and his deep and wide learning made his letters an ornament of the Persian language and literature. He had a special gift of expressing his views with force and clarity in the minimum of words. He was so abstemious and industrious that he slept only for three hours, took only one meal and spent the rest of his time in prayer, religious study and business of state. He had a wide knowledge of the details of administration of each central department and

could pass correct orders even without assistance from departmental heads.

Despite all these qualities, during the fifty years of his reign the roots of the Timurid dynasty in India were badly shaken and its decline and fall became more patent than ever. Numerous factors contributed to this. The ability and industry of the Emperor enabled him to interfere even in minute details. It was therefore noised abroad that he distrusted everybody and wanted to look into everything himself. Consequently, even the highest dignitaries lost their sense of responsibility and degenerated into mere dignified head clerks. The Emperor wanted to keep everybody under strict discipline. Hence secret opposition started. He himself had waded to the throne through the blood of his brothers and had incarcerated even his own father. Many people, therefore, regarded him as sly and hypocritical and his own sons aspired to follow in his footsteps. Even after two or three years of his confinement Shahjahan was found to be intriguing against him because he found Aurangzeb's treatment unduly harsh and unsympathetic. Aurangzeb could not lose sight of the fact that he had been insulted by his own brother, persecuted by his own father, deceived by his own son and coaxed by his own sister in order to encompass his murder. How could he then have any faith in anybody in the world? He thought that one could safely rely only on Allah for no man can be trusted to be loyal if it conflicts with his own self-interest. This was a defect not so much of his character as a gift of the circumstances surrounding him. Whatever the reason, the effect was disastrous for the empire. No man loves to be regarded as corrupt, partial, dishonest or disaffected and if a sovereign were to have that suspicion against all his people, his officers are bound to become dissatisfied and degenerate into base flatterers. This proved to be the cause of Aurangzeb's failure. Secondly, Aurangzeb had got the throne as the rival of Dara, a protagonist of the liberal policy of Akbar. His learning and temperament generated a desire for conformity to the *Shariat*. He was therefore driven to hate music and painting, disband all painters and musicians from court, reimpose the *jizya*, order destruction of unauthorised temples and hate the *Kafirs*. Whatever may have been the religious sanction behind such a policy he was no mere *mulla* but the head of a state two-thirds of whose subjects were *Kafirs* whose wholesale humiliation was bound to affect the stability of the empire. Thus his short-sighted religious policy proved to be another cause of his failure. Thirdly, he carried perseverance to the absurd limit of senseless obstinacy. On going to the Deccan, he clearly realized that it was impossible to suppress the Marathas with disgruntled soldiery and corrupt leadership. But he stuck to his mad design of annihilating them. If after a few sharp blows

to the power of the Marathas, he had come to terms with Rajaram or Shahu on term of vassalage, the Marathas would have readily given in and the financial stability and moral superiority of the empire would not have been affected. By his obstinacy, he generated among the Marathas a unique power of resistance and retaliation, caused grievous losses to the empire and lost his prestige for good. Aurangzeb is thus remarkable from a different point of view. His character evokes admiration but his policy was misguided and reprehensible. He maintained an exterior of courtesy and mildness but at heart he was cruel, distrustful and unrelenting. He was pious and learned but his learning neither made his government more liberal nor did his piety inculcate in him such faith in the unity and omnipotence of God that he might realize that the God of the Hindu could not be distinct from Allah and that though the goal may be the same, the paths leading up to it might be myriads. Akbar extended the empire, gave it a sound government and breathed new vigour into it by a policy of cultural synthesis. Shahjahan gilded and bejewelled it while Aurangzeb in trying to fashion it anew from the very foundations succeeded in shaking it to the base as he lacked the energy and ability to carry through the process of reformation.

Among the Rajput Rajas of this period there were many who in respect of personal valour, capacity for government, diplomatic acumen and qualities of generalship were equal to or in some respects even superior, to Maharana Pratap. But subsequent generations have not accorded that honour to Man Singh, Mirza Raja Jay Singh, Sawai Jay Singh or the Jat King Raja Suraj Mal which Maharana Pratap had received and is receiving even till today. The sole reason of this was his refusal to submit to Akbar on the ground that bartering away one's liberty to secure any honour is unworthy of a self-respecting person. Sacrificing all comfort and convenience at the altar of a noble ideal, fearless defiance of death and refusing to be cowed down by an apparently invincible power of the enemy is writ large in his career. With a mere handful of men at his back, he defied the arms of a powerful Emperor like Akbar with such fortitude, valour, and irrepressible courage and confidence that it evoked the admiration of all. He won undying fame and glory because of his readiness to die for a noble cause.

But a dispassionate view of the whole situation suggests that success of the Rana was not purely due to his own merits. Other Rajput Rajas had a sense of respect for him and were disinclined to make him a prisoner. Perhaps the Emperor himself would not have been happy to destroy the power of the Maharana. He only desired to demonstrate the success of his

policy by winning the Rana to his side. That is why he too never made a determined effort to annihilate him. Wars on the north-western frontier and rebellion of Salim indirectly helped him. If he had lived a little longer he would undoubtedly have been obliged to do what his son Amar Singh did in 1614. At best he could have committed suicide to vindicate his honour. If in his war against Akbar the Rana had succeeded in roping in the active support of other Rajput chiefs, his credit would have been higher, and he might have found it easier to defend the liberty of his land.

Chhatrapati Shivaji occupies a unique place among the rulers of later medieval India. Among the five monarchs specially noticed in this period he was the only man besides Sher Shah who rose to kingship from the humble rank, being the son of a petty *jagirdar*. Maharana Pratap had the advantage of the resources of an organised kingdom, the halo of an ancient ruling family of renown and the services of a devoted people. His opponent Akbar had to work in more trying circumstances than his great-grandson Aurangzeb. Even then, Maharana Pratap failed to retain intact the integrity of his kingdom. But Shivaji not only defended his paternal *jagir* but succeeded in founding a new kingdom and having himself crowned as *Chhatrapati* in the teeth of active opposition by the prosperous and powerful Emperor. The history of India speaks of many persons like Sher Shah, Hemu, Hyder Ali and Ranjit Singh who rose from humble beginnings to kingship. But the achievement of Shivaji is far more glorious than theirs. Shivaji was the only person who in defiance of the authority of such an able Emperor of such a strong and extensive empire, first built up an army without the advantage of a high pedigree or accumulated wealth and then gradually improved and augmented it till it became the instrument of founding and defending an independent kingdom. This unique success of Shivaji was due to his unblemished character, indefatigable labour, unconquerable will and peerless power of organisation. The topography of Maharashtra, a religious resurgence and the civil and military experience acquired by the Marathas in general and the House of Bhonsle in particular indeed proved useful. Even his father Shahji did not believe that Shivaji would be able to defy Adil Shah with impunity. He therefore wanted that he should come to terms with him and become his *jagirdar*. But relying on the blessings of his mother, the grace of *Bhawani* and his own native intelligence, Shivaji refused to accept any shackles and kept both the Adil Shah and the Emperor equally at bay. His strength and credit rose so high that imperial generals despaired of success against him and sought instead, to act in collusion with him. Qutb Shah became something like his tributary while the Adil Shah got

accustomed to look upon him as his first line of defence. He breathed a new life into Maharashtra and had himself crowned in 1674 with due eclat and ceremony. He established friendly contacts with the Rathors and the Bundelas and his glorious example served as a beacon light to them in their future struggle against the authority of the Emperor. He surprised an imperial Viceroy in the repose of his bed, defied the Emperor in his own capital and successfully returned to his homeland, despite the iron ring thrown round him. He represented a harmonious blending of the qualities of a general, statesman, nationbuilder and ruler and his achievement astonished everybody.

Shivaji exhibited a marvellous genius for organisation. He set up a council of ministers to aid and advise him and in keeping with the ancient Hindu tradition included eight persons in it. Distribution of functions among them was made in such wise as might ensure mutual cooperation and leave sufficient scope for giving a top priority to military demands of the state. He kept the taxes low, provided for impartial and speedy justice, nursed agriculture and industry, adopted a policy of religious toleration, kept the military organisation upto the mark and under strict discipline, and exploited caste differences and peculiar aptitudes in the defence of his forts. He developed a scheme of raising *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* as a means of augmenting his revenue resources. He also started building up a navy with a two-fold aim of developing foreign trade and protecting the integrity of Indian waters against encroachments by foreigners such as the Sidi of Janjira and the European trading companies. But he died at the early age of 53 and his son and successor failed to follow in his footsteps or else the history and achievements of the Maratha race and its empire would have attained greater stability and renown.

But the kingdom of Shivaji had one special weakness which ultimately proved its undoing. Shivaji needed a large force for garrisoning hundreds of his forts and fighting against powerful enemies. But he could not foot its salary bill out of his normal resources. He therefore employed it in plundering enemy territory on the excuse of realizing *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* and insisted on the entire booty being deposited in the treasury out of which the soldiers got only their normal salaries and special awards for meritorious service. The practice of realizing *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* persisted even under the *Peshwas* and when the central government became weak and local Maratha leaders gained in strength, very often, more than one person demanded *Chauth* from the same area and in the event of refusal ordered a general and indiscriminate loot. This antagonised the people and the uncertainty of their income led to piling up of heavy debts and miscarriage of military programmes. The government of Shivaji has, therefore, sometimes been called

the government of powerful bandits. Although such an estimate is not quite just, yet this must be admitted that payment of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* brought no permanent gain to those who paid it. The Marathas on the other hand generally regarded it as a prelude to the establishment of their full sovereignty over the area.

All the rulers, cited above possessed high military and administrative talents. But taking all points into consideration, Akbar stands out pre-eminent among them. Comparative Estimate Shaljahhan suffered from unbridled vanity, sensuality, love of the magnificence and ruthless severity in securing his ends. He had at one time been guilty of religious persecution and his moral character was not quite free from blemish. Though regular in his prayers, he was not quite strict in keeping the *roza* (fast in Ramzan). Thus his personal and public conduct was not quite unexceptionable. The defects of Aurangzeb's character and policy threatened the very existence of the state. Aurangzeb had the grit and the energy to conquer an enemy but he lacked the requisite ability and large-heartedness to convert him into a friend. Once offended, he was relentless, no matter whether the victim of his wrath was his brother, father or son. Forget and forgive was foreign to his irate nature. Maharana Pratap's activity was confined within a limited sphere and a narrow vision. He could be a fighter for parochial freedom but not an illustrious nation-builder. He knew the art of spilling blood but not of making an enlightened reapproachment. He could stake his life in vindication of his honour but lacked the diplomatic acumen to alleviate popular sufferings by finesse and art. Shivaji possessed all the qualities of a nation-builder but the success attained in terms of territory was quite limited and his political ideal and scheme of government cannot stand comparison with that of Akbar. In the immaturity of youth Akbar was no doubt guilty of certain moral lapses and escapades but with growing age he became suave and restrained without becoming a puritanical anchorite. He too made a display of his power and prosperity but he based his glory and greatness more on a spirit of liberalism, original thinking, capacity for reform and organisation than on the overwhelming effect of his boundless wealth in gold and jewels. In his resolve to suppress an enemy he brooked no delay on account of distance, adverse weather or inferior numbers but in his statecraft repression was not the only means of dealing with them. After an effective display of superior might, he was always willing to concede to the vanquished a suitable place, in conformity with his own judgment and ideals, in his scheme of government. He established unity and cordiality among the Hindus and the Muslims, assured equal civil and political rights to all his

subjects, founded an extensive empire and evolved an enlightened scheme of government for its administration. He shreaded the government of its foreign character and made it into a thoroughly national government ministering to the legitimate needs and aspirations of all classes of people in the state. In literature, art and architecture, the country made a rapid advance to glory and the India of 1605 in comparison to what it was in 1556 became happy and prosperous, cultured and progressive, enjoying peace and good government. That is why this great Emperor continues to enjoy a place of respect and honour in the hearts of the people of this country even to this day.

Although it was an age of despotic government, even painstaking sovereigns like Sher Shah, Akbar and Aurangzeb could not carry on the work of different departments of government without the assistance of any departmental heads. Numerous problems cropped up from time to time, in tackling which, consultation with men of experience and ability was often useful if not altogether essential. Hence all despots had a set of advisers or ministers. This is true of the Timurids as well as of the Marathas. It was with their assistance that the sovereign carried on the central government and exercised control and supervision over provincial and local government. But beside regular ministers or departmental heads, there were some friends or boon companions and officers of the court and the royal household. These latter had opportunities of coming in very close contact with the sovereign. Hence they too exercised influence. In the reign of Akbar, Abul Fazl influenced the policy of the state greatly, although he did not formally hold the office of the *Wazir* or the *Vakil*, because the Emperor was convinced of his wisdom and loyalty.

During this age there were neither organised political parties nor any representative assemblies. Hereditary offices were considered prejudicial to the interests of the state. Hence appointment of ministers depended entirely on the sweet will of the sovereign. Shivaji also admitted no artificial restraints on his free choice of ministers and took good care to prevent any high office becoming hereditary. The result was that the monarch could dismiss or transfer any minister at will. Nor did such conduct provoke any opposition. Hence in comparison to the sovereign ministers were generally weak and they acted only as his servants or lieutenants but not as his ministers in the modern sense of the term. Notwithstanding that, some ministers did exercise great influence by virtue of their sagacity and experience.

In the reign of Akbar many important changes took place in the nature and organisation of the Central Government.

Professor Qanungo describes Sher Shah as the precursor of Akbar. But in the organisation of the Central Government he owed nothing to Sher Shah. He fixed the powers and responsibilities of his ministers in due regard to the practices of the former Sultans of Delhi, Turkey and Persia with necessary adjustments to suit Indian conditions. Just as the Sultans of Delhi had a *Naib Sultan* and the Abbasid Caliphs a *Wazir-i-tafwid* (minister with unlimited powers), similarly, Akbar also had a *Vakil*. *Vakil* literally means a representative. Hence, the encumbent of this office could exercise all powers on behalf of and in the name of the sovereign. The *Ashtapradhan* of Shivaji, formerly had no such office, but after his death, exigencies of war necessitated the creation of the office of *Pratinidhi* for Prahlad Niraji. Constitutionally, the *Pratinidhi* or the *Vakil* ranked above all other ministers because they had the right of exercising supervision and control over them. But the Maratha *Ashtapradhan* had a *Mukhya Pradhan* also called the *Peshwa* who in practice ranked above the *Pratinidhi* and from the time of Bajirao I his pre-eminence became a settled fact.

Bairam Khan the first *Vakil* of Akbar was so powerful that he did whatever he liked even without reference to the sovereign. But from the time of Munim Khan's appointment he left his political hegemony intact, but in practice the *Wazir* or the *High Diwan* who became the head of the Finance Department became a close rival to, or even more influential than, the *Vakil*. Akbar usually kept the office vacant lest another powerful *Vakil* might once again jeopardise the security of the realm. After Bairam Khan, the next powerful *Vakil* was Asaf Khan on whom Shahjahan conferred the *mansab* of 9000 *Zat*, 9000 *Sawar* and whose relationship with the *Wazir* was defined in terms which made the latter definitely subordinate to him. When Bahadur Shah sought to satisfy the ambitions of Asad Khan by appointing him as *Vakil-i-mutlaq* while Munim Khan held the office of the *Wazir* the former laid claim to powers formerly enjoyed by Asaf Khan, some of which were as under :—

(1) He attended the evening audience for the purpose of laying all business before His Majesty,

(2) Appointments and removals of *Subahdars*, *faujdars* and *diwans* as well as resumption or exchange of assignments were recommended by him and the Emperor took no action in respect of them except on the basis of such recommendations,

(3) He kept the royal seal,

(4) He received a copy of the reports from the provinces and of every paper filed by the Chief Diwan,

(5) All warrants of appointment bore his seal and signature, and

(6) He had special privilege regarding the beating of his kettle-drums and coming to Court in his litter.

But Bahadur Shah rejected his demand on the ground that Asaf Khan had enjoyed special privileges because he was the father-in-law of the Emperor. A man was usually appointed *Vakil* only as a sop to his vanity and pride. But it was considered unsafe to allow him the privilege of supervision and control over the entire administration. Hence the Timurid *Vakil* and the Maratha *Pratinidhi* had practically the same status—constitutional pre-eminence in theory but neglect or supersession in practice.

The next officer below the *Vakil* was the *Diwan-i-Ala* who presided over the finance department. When there was no *Vakil* he acted as the Prime Minister as well. But

Wazir or the High Diwan even when there was a *Vakil*, he enjoyed certain privileges which made him more powerful and influential than others. When the High Diwan specifically enjoyed the status of the Prime Minister, he was called the *Wazir*. During this period, there were numerous categories of *diwans* e.g. the *diwan* in charge of the provincial exchequer, the *diwans* of *jagirdars* and princes, or the *Diwan-i-khalsa*. Hence the *diwan* at the centre was distinguished from them by the appellation of the *Wazir* or the *Diwan-i-Ala*.

The functions of the High Diwan can be classified under two heads: (i) Purely fiscal and (ii) as a link between the Emperor and the rest of the government. His functions under the first head were very wide and comprehensive and no matter relating to revenue or expenditure was beyond the purview of his direct or indirect control.

All tax-collectors within the empire were under his control and were appointed either directly by him or by the Emperor in consultation with him. After appointment,

Financial Powers they received the necessary instructions and the warrant of appointment from his office and thereafter sent him full reports of revenue collection stating the revenue demand, actual collection, remissions or/ and arrears. These statements generally come to him through the office of the provincial *diwan*. The issuing of necessary instructions and directions in regard to these statements was his principal duty. Allocation of grant for different departments was made by him. He was assisted by a *Mustaufi*, who audited records of expenditure relating to different departments. All payments from treasury required his sanction and no expenditure could legally be made except under his authority. He kept a vigilant eye over income and expenditure and reported the latest position to the Emperor every day or periodically. All measures of reform concerning the land revenue, customs duties or fiscal organisation emanated from his office and it was his special responsibility to see that they were successfully carried out. The success or failure of the fiscal policy of the state thus very largely depended on him.

Like the modern Prime Ministers he served as the link between the Emperor and the administration. A record of the activities of each department was sent to him and his department served as the Public Diwan-i-Ala Records Office of the empire. He presented all and higher *mansabdars* before the Emperor and despatched replies to them according to his instructions. Letters of routine character were disposed of by him without reference to the Emperor. All diplomatic correspondence addressed to foreign princes was drafted by him and all warrants of appointment transfer and promotion were issued from his office and under his signature. He maintained direct contact with provincial governors and kept himself posted upto date about prevailing conditions by asking for regular periodical reports, and sent them necessary directions on behalf of the emperor. His relation with the Emperor were quite intimate and seldom was a major decision taken without his confidence. He was invited to all secret meetings and his opinion generally carried more weight with the Emperor.

An index of the scope and importance of the work of the *Wazir* is provided by the number and nature of his principal lieutenants viz. (1) *Diwan-i-Khalsa*, in charge of crown lands (2) *Diwan-i-tan* who dealt with *jagirs* and salaries, (3) *Mustaufi* who audited income and expenditure (4) *Waqianavis* who maintained a record of all important *farmans* and incidents and was perhaps in charge of the Imperial Record Office attached to the office of the *Diwan-i-Ala*, and (5) the *Mushrif* who was in general charge of the secretariat and auditing of accounts.

Another important central minister was the *Khan-i-Saman*. In the beginning he was not considered very important and figured only as one of the subordinates of the *Wazir*. But he soon gained in importance in respect of personal influence over the Emperor and ranked next to the *Wazir* alone. The state at that time owned more than a hundred *karkhanas* or factories. These were engaged in a variety of jobs ranging from construction of roads, bridges, palaces etc. to the manufacture of all articles of everyday use and luxury needed in the royal household or at the court. They also manufactured various types of fancy goods, articles of decoration, jewellery, and requirements of the wardrobe, the army and the offices. The *Khan-i-Saman* was the head of these *karkhanas* and as such exercised general supervision and administrative control over them. He appointed the necessary personnel and allocated duties to them. Purchase of raw material and storage of finished products and their utilization in the best interests of the state was a part of his duty. He was also the head of the Household Department and controlled the

entire staff attached to the court or the royal palaces. All stores and treasuries attached to court and the *Harem* were under his control. So was the department of gifts and he was expected to maintain a fair supply of suitable articles for presentation on different occasions. He had to maintain a schedule of prices of all such articles. Valuation and storage of articles presented to the Emperor was his responsibility. He maintained an account of daily expense out of the privy purse of the Emperor and purchased articles needed by the court but not produced by the royal *karkhanas*. He who could promptly supply all casual demands of the Emperor, was alone, considered an efficient *Khan-i-Saman*. There was considerable scope for corruption in this department. Hence a man of integrity rose quickly in royal estimation and was considered eligible for appointment as the *Wazir*. It was not an easy job to acquaint oneself with the tastes and fleeting fancies of the Emperor and to collect things suited to his choice, but this is what was expected of a capable *Khan-i-Saman*. Frequently he assisted the amirs in the selection of presents likely to please the Emperor and won their lasting gratitude. He thus exercised a tremendous influence at the imperial court.

The next important central minister was *Mir Bakhshi*. He was the head of the Military Department. But after the introduction of the *mansabdari* system, most of the Government employees were placed on the military pay roll so that the *Mir Bakhshi* became the Paymaster Central of the Empire as well. His office maintained a record of salaries, allowances, deductions *etc.* of each officer placed under the *mansabdari* system. He passed their salaries and sent on the bills to the *Wazir*. He made rules relating to recruitment, training, maintenance, discipline and salaries of soldiers of different categories. The *mansabdars* coming from the provinces were presented before the Emperor by him. New *mansabdars* were appointed through his office and it was he who presented them before the Emperor. In time of war, he summoned the necessary contingents and appointed the leader of the campaign. He also made provision for adequate supplies to the army and for the residence and stay of the Emperor during his tours or when campaigning. He was a member of the secret council and was consulted on almost all secret and important matters. With the expansion of the empire his responsibilities became exceptionally heavy, and he was provided with three deputies to assist him. Each province also had a *Bakhshi* separately but they were all under the general control of the central *Bakhshi*.

The Ecclesiastical Department of the Empire was headed by the *Sadr-i-Jahan*, also called the *Sadr-us-Sudur*. Upto the time of Akbar there was only one *Sadr* for the whole empire. But the latter appointed *Sadrs* in the provinces, so to distinguish the

Sadr-i-Jahan or
Sadr-us-Sudur

central *Sadr* his title became *Sadr-i-Jahan* or *Sadr-us-Sudur*. In the beginning, he was not counted among the servants of the crown and received no *mansab*. But later on he too became a *mansabdar*. As the head of the Ecclesiastical Department, he regulated the religious policy of the state and arranged for the realization of the *jizya* and the *zakat*. He also held charge of Public charities and Endowments and as such made grants for religious and educational purposes out of *zakat* money and *Sayurghal* lands. Lands and funds at his disposal were employed for granting relief to widows, orphans and the indigent, paying subsistence allowance to saints, derwishes, learned men and teachers and stipends to deserving students, and for endowing educational institutions, mosques, *Khanqahs* etc. He appointed and controlled the staff for mosques and made rules for their general guidance. The *Muhtasib* or the censor of public morals acted under his control and sought to enforce conformity to the principles of Islam.

Allied to this was the Department of Justice, presided over by the *Qazi-ul-quzat*. The Ecclesiastical and the judicial departments were placed under a single person although he was known by different titles according to the nature of his work. As the ecclesiastical head, he was the *Sadr-i-Jahan* but as the chief justice of the empire he was called the *Qazi-ul-Quzat*. There was a chief *Mufti* also, who interpreted the law while the chief *Qazi* applied it. As the Chief Justice of the realm he appointed local and provincial *Qazis* and other staff.

Although the *Sadr-i-Jahan* was the custodian of the law, religion and public morals, he did not always set a noble example by his exemplary conduct. In his early years, Akbar showed such reverence for the *Sadr* that he personally collected his shoes and placed them at the right place. But soon complaints against his conduct began to pour in and when an enquiry was held, he was found to be very dishonest and unscrupulous, and guilty of heavy embezzlements. He had made grants to his own relatives and dependents and what was worse to mere fictitious persons and pocketed the gains himself. Shahjahan too discovered great irregularities in the conduct of one of his *Sadrs* and had to dismiss him. In order to keep the *Sadr* on the path of virtue, Akbar drastically cut down his powers and appointed provincial *Sadrs* to attend to local needs. He also made it a rule that an award or cancellation of a grant should require his concurrence, and all proposals made by the *Sadr* were to be scrutinized by the office of the *Wazir*. To tighten the imperial grip over him, he was made a *mansabdar* but that too did not eradicate the evil as evidenced in the reign of Shahjahan.

Beside these four or five principal pillars of the state, there were numerous others whose rank was inferior but who exercised considerable influence at the centre. One of these was *Mir-i-Atish* or *Darogha-i-*

Topkhana. He was the head of the gunners and the musketeers. This post was usually held by a Turk or a Persian because the artillery of those countries was supposed to be superior to that of India.

The *Darogha-i-Dak-Chauki* was the head of the Information and Intelligence Department and controlled the newswriters and secret informers deputed in the provinces.

The *Mir Munshi* was in charge of drafting letters and *farmans* and was generally under the control of the *Wazir*.

Besides these, there was an army of clerks, accountants auditors, orderlies *etc.* who carried on the official work of the central departments or ran the state-owned factories. Akbar was the first man who tried to regulate and systematise this huge administrative edifice and developed rules, traditions and practices which made for efficient and smooth working of the different departments. One of the special features of this system was that everything had to appear sound on paper and copies of all papers going out of different departments had to be sent to the *Wazir*. The government thus appeared quite efficient on paper though actual conditions did not always conform to rules and regulations. The Mughal government has, therefore, sometimes been called 'Paper Government'.

Shivaji established a more or less analogous machinery. His principal ministers numbered eight and each one of them was called *Pradhan* or Head. Hence the council of ministers was collectively known as the *Ashta Pradhan* i. e. 8 Heads of Departments. The official titles and functions of the members of council of ministers were.

(1) *The Peshwa or the Mukhya Pradhan*—He attended to all types of government business and put his seal on official letters and documents, and led campaigns into enemy territory and made provision for government of all conquered territory. He acted under the direction of the *Chhatrapati* and was entitled to precedence over all military officers and commanders. He, thus, had no definite department under his charge but was expected to function primarily as the chief minister of the kingdom.

(2) *The Senapati*—He was in charge of organising the army and keeping it in proper shape and discipline. He too was expected to lead campaigns against the enemy and to prepare a correct inventory of the booty captured; the prayers and problems of the soldiers were presented before the *Chhatrapati* by him and he always acted according to the instructions of the *Chhatrapati*.

(3) *The Amatya*—He maintained a record of the revenue and expenditure of the state and scrutinized papers received from the *Chitnis* and the *Fadnis* to which were affixed his seal and signature as a mark of his approval. As the head of the Finance Department, he supervised the work of the personnel employed under him. He too had to perform military duties and to submit to the authority of the *Chhatrapati* in all matters.

(4) *The Sachiva*—He drafted letters on behalf of the *Chhatrapati* and carefully scrutinized their contents before despatch lest there should be any mistakes. He had to fix his seal of approval on all official letters and orders. He too performed military duties and helped in the settlement and control of conquered territory. He had to submit to all orders from the *Chhatrapati*.

(5) *The Sumanta*—He was the foreign minister and arranged for the reception of foreign envoys and diplomatic agents. He put his seal of approval on all correspondence with foreign princes and was also expected to accompany the army and to act according to the behests of the *Chhatrapati*.

(6) *The Mantri*—He was in charge of the department dealing with information, intelligence, diplomacy and war and peace. He was also expected to go campaigning and administer conquered territory. He fixed his seal of approval on all letters passing through his hands.

(7) *The Panditrao*—He was in charge of the Ecclesiastical Department and dealt with all matters relating to religion and public morals. Matters relating to ritual, conduct and atonement were decided by him, and in matters relating to punishment he was expected to act with discretion and benevolence. Reception of the learned, administration of public charities and provision for religious rites and ceremonies fell within his purview.

(8) *The Nyayadhis*—He had jurisdiction over all types of cases and delivered judgments under his signature.

Members of the *Ashtapradhan* had to perform a large variety of functions. With the exception of the *Nyayadhis* and the *Panditrao* every other minister was expected to render military service. Shivaji had entrusted the *Peshwa*, the *Mantri* and the *Sachiva* with the government of the provinces as well. In this capacity they were known as *Sar-karkuns* because they had a number of *karkuns* serving under them.

Shivaji kept the *Ashtapradhan* under his strict control by appointing their assistants and subordinates himself. Each *Pradhan* had one or two principal assistants. During the absence of the *Sar-karkuns* from their provinces, the government

was carried on by *Darakhdars* while for the discharge of their duties at the centre during their absence there was a *Mutliq*. Both these categories of officers were appointed by the *Chhatrapati*.

The *Chhatrapati* had a private Secretary and personal adviser called the *Chitnis*. This post was held under Shivaji by Babaji Abji. He was so capable and wise that his influence was in no way less than that of the *Pradhans*.

Then there were *Mahals* and *karkhanas* which had their own heads but they ranked much lower than departmental heads. There were besides clerks, accountants, superintendents, newscarriers, peons *etc.*

Each *Pradhan* had a staff of 8 clerical assistants to run the department in his charge. They were : (1) *Diwan*, (2) *Majumder* or accountant and auditor (3) *Fadnis* or deputy auditor, (4) *Sabnis* or record-keeper, (5) *Karkhanis* or the storekeeper, (6) *Chitnis*, or the correspondence clerk, (7) *Jamadar*, or the treasurer and (8) *Potnis* or the petty cashier for imprest account.

There are many points of similarity between the Mughal and Maratha machinery for central government. In both the Mughal and Maratha systems the sovereign stood on a much higher pedestal of glory and power than even the combined strength of his councillors who were his mere creatures and whose future career depended on his favour and discretion. They had to bow to his decision in all cases. Thus the constitutional position of the two councils was more or less identical. Among the ministers, the *Vakil* and the *Pratinidhi*, the *Nyayadhish* and the *Qazi-ul-quzat*, and the *Panditrao* and the *Sadr-i-Jahan* performed almost analogous functions. But other ministers had many dissimilarities. The Mughals had no Prime Minister like the *Peshwa* free from all departmental worries. Similarly, the Maratha *Amatya* was only partially like the *Wazir* whose wide range of functions were performed by the *Peshwa* and the *Amatya* put together. Similarly the *Senapati* and the *Mir Bakhshi* have only partial identity because while the former was primarily a military leader and a general the latter was essentially a civilian officer who performed non-military duties of the military department. As the Marathas had no *mansabdari* system the *Senapati* had no means of acquiring that influence over the nobility of the empire which the *Bakhshi* as the Paymaster exercised. The Maratha *Sachiva* and *Sumant* had no Mughal counterparts. In the Mughal court, diplomatic correspondence was generally carried on by the *Wazir*, the *Mir Munshi* or some other special favourite of the Emperor. Diplomatic negotiations generally devolved on the *Wazir* or the general at the spot. The *Mantri* among the Marathas was analogous to the *Darogha-i-Dak Chauki* but his poli-

tical influence was much greater than that of his Mughal counterpart. The Mughal Khan-i-Saman had no counterpart among the Marathas.

There was besides a world of difference in their mode of working. Shivaji imposed military duties on all his ministers except the *Panditrao* and the *Nyayadhish*. This was due to the peculiar position of the Maratha kingdom. The Mughal Emperor on the other hand, generally did not assign military duties to ministers although there are some examples of the *Wazir*, the *Khan-i-Saman* or the *Bakhshi* being given military assignments. The Mughal ministers therefore could pay more whole-hearted attention to departmental duties. In the Mughal scheme of government no central minister before the 18th century was permitted to combine his office with that of a provincial governor which was quite usual with the Marathas.

Among the finance ministers of Akbar, Todarmal acquired the widest fame although Mansur's knowledge of financial affairs was perhaps deeper and wider. Todarmal was a stern master and never hesitated to punish those who were found guilty of remissness. He was himself honest and industrious and insisted on the same qualities among his subordinates. He could therefore never gain popularity among his staff. But he commanded the esteem of the Emperor and his subjects. He won his early laurels by setting the finances of Gujerat on a sound footing and then immortalised his name by his association with the *Dahsala* system. In the reign of Jahangir, Etmad-ud-daula had a great share in keeping the administrative edifice sound and efficient and when Nurjahan became the Empress, his importance increased still further. But he made no special contribution of lasting value. Under Shahjahan, Sadullah Khan was a capable administrator and a fearless counsellor. He was held in such high esteem by the Emperor that he rebuked even Dara for opposing him. Sadullah Khan's special concern was to spare no culprit. But Dara was so easily moved by tears that he became a champion of all lost causes and never disobliged anybody who interceded his favour. Sadullah Khan did not like this indiscriminate patronage of all bad characters. Aurangzeb pays tribute to the sagacity and wide experience of Asad Khan in his last letter. All these persons contributed to the strength and prosperity of the empire. Competent *Wazirs* generally knew more than one language and were men of learning with a special gift for drafting excellent letters.

The most serious defect in the central government of this age was that it depended too much for its success on the personality of a single individual—the Monarch. All the Mughal Emperors from Akbar to Aurangzeb were able and painstaking. Hence

Defects and
drawbacks

the central government under them remained efficient. But during Jahangir's illness when the Emperor could not attend to public business, difficulties began to crop up and if he had failed to secure the services of Nurjahan these might have assumed even more dangerous proportions. As long as Shahjahan looked into state business himself, there was no trouble. But as soon as he began to lean unduly on Dara, factions arose and discontent began to brew up. As long as Aurangzeb, remained in the north, the machinery of government remained all right but when he was called away to the Deccan and had to stay there, control became lax and lawlessness started. After his death, the evil effects of the weakness of the sovereign began to show themselves and the Empire which had been nursed to strength by a labour of centuries went to pieces within a few years.

The same is noticed in Maratha history. Members of Shivaji's *Ashtapradhan* did not have the same respect for Shambhuji as they had for his father. Shambhuji himself was incapable of winning their esteem and confidence by his sterling character or heroic exploits. Hence, disturbances soon began and old and experienced officers lost their hold on the government and a stranger from the north became the conscience-keeper of Shambhuji. This Kanyakubja Brahmin named Kavi-Kalash was so intensely hated by the Marathas that they called him Kavi-Kalush and attributed all Shambhuji's failings to his evil influence. The result was that the Maratha kingdom lost its former vigour and vitality.

Secondly, in the matter of appointments previous experience was not always taken into account and sometimes able persons were shunted away to another place without any rhyme or reason.

Then, in both the systems, ministers were sent out campaigning or deputed to govern provinces. This undoubtedly had an adverse effect on Departmental efficiency. New ministers often tried to employ men in whom they had special interest or confidence. Consequently, they did get full cooperation from their staff. If there had existed definite rules governing the status and privileges of the civil services, an efficient bureaucracy might have been built up which could have carried on the government efficiently even in the absence of the Emperor and his ministers.

Lastly, the ministers enjoyed a very high status and considering the then financial resources their salaries were exorbitantly high. These they employed in aping the manners of royalty and leading a life of luxury which was regarded as a necessary adjunct of high office. This affected the moral standards of the people of the lower grades. And this moral delinquency of its servants later led to the decline of the empire.

CHAPTER XXI

PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Upto the time of Akbar's accession to the throne no systematic effort had been made to organise the provinces according to a definite plan. Wars against the Rajputs, Mongol invaders and rebellious nobles kept the central government so busy that it had never had leisure to organise the provinces properly. In those days, the territory held by an important amir with a prominent fort as the centre of his authority was loosely termed a province. Hence the number and extent of these provinces continued to change endlessly. It rarely happened that a Sultan interfered in the internal affairs of a province which were generally left to be tackled by the local governor according to his intelligence and resources. Before the time of Akbar, Sher Shah alone had made comprehensive reforms in the general tenor of the government. But we find no specific mention of any far-reaching changes in the internal organisation of the provinces. Qanungo has, therefore, suggested that he probably intended abolishing the province as a unit of administration. Although Dr. Parmatma Saran challenges this view and cites evidence in favour of persistence of provinces throughout his reign, he too agrees that he did not introduce any reforms in the general scheme of provinces.

Hence, just as Akbar owed little or nothing to Sher Shah in reordering of his central government, similarly he had to depend on his own intelligence for the reorganisation of the provincial government as well. He decided to divide the empire in large-sized provinces more or less of equal dimensions according to natural frontiers and administrative convenience and set up in them a government which was almost a replica of the centre. By 1580, he had concluded the conquest of practically the whole of northern India. Between 1573-1581, he had introduced many important reforms, one of which related to the organisation of the provinces.

In 1581, he divided the whole empire into 12 *subas* and named them after territories or principal towns of the area. These 12 provinces were Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Delhi, Agra, Ajmer, Allahabad, Awadh, Bihar, Bengal, Malwa and Gujerat (or Ahmedabad). When fresh annexations were made Kashmir and Qandahar were attached to Kabul, Orissa to Bengal and Sindh or Thatta to Multan. Thus, till the conquest of the Deccan, the number of provinces stood at 12 although the area of certain provinces enormously increased. After the conquest

of the Deccan, three additional provinces of Khandesh, Berar and Ahmednagar were formed so that the number of provinces rose to 15. Jahangir left this number unchanged.

But in the reign of Shahjahan, the rest of the Nizamshahi kingdom was also annexed and the whole of Ahmadnagar territory was formed into two provinces of Daulatabad and Telingana. When he reconquered Qandahar in 1638, he made that into a separate province. He also formed the new provinces of Kashmir, Thatta and Orissa by detaching them from the unwieldy provinces of Kabul, Multan and Bengal respectively. Thus the number of provinces in his reign rose to 20. For some time he was the master also of Balkh and Badakhshan. It is probably by counting them that Abdul Hamid Lahori gives the number of provinces as 22. But when Balkh, Badakhshan and Qandahar were lost, the number decreased to 19. Aurangzeb formed two new provinces of Hyderabad and Bijapur after the annexation of Golkunda and Bijapur. Telingana and Daulatabad were now rechristened Bidar and Aurangabad respectively. Thus the number of provinces rose to 21. But the number of provinces under Aurangzeb too is given as 22 which does not seem to be correct, unless the temporary conquest of Assam was reckoned as a new province.

All tributary states were treated as sarkars or parganas according to their importance and extent of territory of a province. Thus from the time of Akbar every bit of the empire formed a part of one or the other province and each province had a more or less uniform pattern of government. There was only one distinction. In some cases, a single governor was appointed for more than one province. Thus ever since the days of Akbar, the whole of the Deccan was placed under a single viceroy with deputy governors for each province under him and with a government more or less analogous to that of other provinces. Sometimes a single person combined the Diwani of more than one province under him e.g. Murshid Quli in Bengal and Orissa. Thus began the practice of absentee governorships which later had dangerous repercussions. Except for this, each province had a uniform pattern of government.

The head of the province was called *Sipahsaler*, *Subadar*, *Suba*, or *Nazim* whose power and position was very much like that of the Emperor at the centre. His principal officers of the province principal assistants were people who bore designations similar to those of central ministers and performed similar functions. Chief among these were (1) *Diwan*, (2) *Bakhshi*, (3) *Sadr*, (4) *Qazi*, (5) *Kotwal* and (6) *Waqianavis*. Some provinces had *Darogha-i-Topkhana* and *Mir Bahr* (officer in charge of naval or river craft) as well. Among these, the *Diwan* was almost a rival of the *Nazim*. Akbar added

to his powers and status and in 1596 which freed him from the control of the *Nazim* and made him directly subordinate to the central *Wazir*. This dyarchical arrangement was made to check the possibility of rebellion. But later Mughals in their weakness had at times to acquiesce in the combination of the *Diwani* and the *Nizamat* in same hands which rendered successful rebellion easy. An instance in point is the appointment of Murshid Quli by Bahadur Shah as the *Diwan* and the *Nazim* of Bengal and Orissa which led to the foundation of the Nawabi of Bengal. The *Bakhshi* ranked next to the *Diwan* in respect of importance.

A governor was appointed by a royal *farman* called *farman-i-Sabati* on the advice of the *Wazir*. He was usually a high *mansabdar* and was promoted to a higher rank at the time of his appointment. Because of his high *mansab* he drew a high salary and at times—as in Gujerat—received an additional allowance as well. He therefore lived in great style almost like kings, so that foreign travellers were struck by his dignity and magnificence, impossible even to crowned heads in Europe. The salary was often paid by means of a *jagir* usually located in the province of which he held charge. This too added to his prestige. No other officer in the province could compare with him in wealth and importance.

He was the pivot of the provincial government and peace and prosperity of the province was principally his charge. His main duty was to control the provincial administrative staff and maintain law and order for which he took a number of measures. He dealt kindly but firmly with the local civil and intelligence staff. He was interested in their well-being and wrote to Emperor about their merits, recommending promotion wherever justifiable, but warned all indolent, corrupt and intriguing officers to mend their ways and in the event of their failure terminated or recommended termination of their services. Usually, his recommendation regarding promotion, transfer or punishment of officers was accepted and this strengthened the hands of the governor and enabled him to enforce discipline over the officers of the province. He also tried to ascertain the attitude of local Zamindars and took stringent measures against all who were found to be disaffected or contumacious. But as far as possible he tried to keep them under his control by establishing personal contacts, gratifying them with fine presents and overawing them by his superior might. It was his duty to create conditions favourable to regular and full collection of taxes and to supply military aid where this should become unavoidable. It was again his duty to realize tribute from the chiefs and Rajas under his jurisdiction and to ensure supply of military contingents by them according to the terms of their engagements. He sent fortnightly report to the centre

about conditions in the province and maintained an agent at the imperial headquarters through whom he carried on all correspondence with the central authorities. His success very largely depended on the intelligence, resourcefulness and tact of his agent. He therefore took good care in choosing this man and tried to keep him thoroughly satisfied. He would normally do nothing smacking of rebellion. But some governors at times initiated a war on their own responsibility, or used a terminology appropriate to the sovereign or treated high dignitaries as their personal servants. When such cases and conducts were reported, the Emperor intervened immediately. Jahangir had to issue a circular regarding appropriate conduct of governors when he found Islam Khan, the governor of Bengal treading on forbidden ground. Aurangzeb once had to rebuke Ghaziuddin Firoz Jang for similar lapses.

Almost a close rival in status to the *Nazim* was the provincial *Diwan*. He was appointed by a *hasb-ul-hukm sanad* issued under the seal and the signature of the Imperial *Diwan*. He was not subordinate to the *Nazim* but to the Imperial *Diwan*.

The Provincial
Diwan

His special responsibility was to keep the financial structure of the province intact and to arrange for timely realization of government dues in full. It was his duty to be fully informed about all amirs and *tahsildars*, to give them no opportunity to embezzle or withhold government funds or to oppress the peasants. If he thought necessary he could recommend their removal from service. He also had to make sure that they did not realize any unauthorized *abwabs* or were guilty of corruption. He therefore carefully scrutinised all their papers and set before them a high ideal of industry and integrity. He looked into the condition of peasants and encouraged them to bring more land under the plough and to extend cultivation of superior crops. He granted remissions when there was failure of crops and advanced money to those who brought *banjar* land under cultivation. If revenue was allowed to fall in arrears he arranged for its realization in easy instalments of 5% per season so that the tenant may not find the burden too great and yet government dues may be realized. He arranged for the money to be deposited in local treasuries and for the maintenance of correct accounts. When the period of revenue collection was over, he arranged for the pooling of all collections at the provincial headquarters from where it was sent to the central treasury. He too had to send fortnightly reports to the centre not only of the revenue and expenditure in particular but also about the general condition prevailing.

Although the position and status of the *Diwan* led to the establishment of a sort of dyarchy in the provinces, his position in relation to the governor was much weaker. The latter

had a much wider income and as the head of the province commanded the provincial contingent of troops while the *Diwan* was under an obligation to attend meetings and assemblies convened by him. This was necessary for the smooth working of the government because if two persons of exactly equal status and importance had been appointed, mutual conflict and jealousy would have increased and the provincial staff might have been divided into two rival camps which would have been detrimental to the interests of the state.

The third important officer in the province was the *Bakhshi* who sometimes acquired more importance than even the *Diwan*.

The provincial
Bakhshi

He was appointed in consultation with the Central *Bakhshi* by a *sanad* issued from his office under his signature and had functions

analogous to his. He looked after the maintenance and control of the troops within the province and enforced imperial regulations on them. He kept an account of the salaries and emoluments of all provincial officers and saw to it that at the time of war or annual inspection each *mansabdar* and *jagirdar* brought his full complement of soldiers of the right standard. He kept a record of all irregularities and discrepancies and demanded explanations about them from the persons concerned.

The *Bakhshi* generally combined the post of the *Waqianavis* also and as such sent detailed fortnightly reports to the centre about the affairs of the province. Thus he too acted as a brake on the governor and the *Diwan*. If the *Subadar*, the *Diwan* and the *Bakhshi* were efficient and devoted to duty, affairs of the province remained tranquil because they could keep the entire provincial staff on the path of duty.

Each province was divided into a number of sarkars : the Sarkars were generally of two types *viz.* (1) ruled by officers appointed by the Emperor and subject to regulations issued by him and (2) states of Rajput or other tributary Rajas, governed by their respective local chiefs, usually, according to their ancient traditions. These latter were described as sarkars only for purposes of record.

Administration of
the Sarkar

The Administration of sarkars proper was modelled on the system established by Sher Shah. But the Mughals made some important changes. The head of the sarkar was now called *Faujdar* who was usually an important *mansabdar* and was appointed by the Emperor. He was in charge of maintaining law and order within the sarkar although in special emergencies he could apply for aid from the *Subadar*. The *Faujdar* had a contingent of troops under his command which were employed for suppressing rebellions and disorders. With the same end in view he divided the sarkar into a number of thanas each under a *Darogha* assisted by a body of policemen. For this purpose, he

appointed a number of *Kotwals* each working under the general control of the *Kotwal* of the sarkar. *Amils* and *Karoris* were employed for collection of taxes within the sarkar but they acted under the general control of the provincial *Diwan*, although the *Faujdar* provided them with military assistance in case of necessity. Adjudication of civil, revenue and criminal cases was entrusted to *Qazis*, *Amils* and *kotwals* respectively.

The next lower unit of administration below the sarkar was the pargana composed of numerous villages. Each pargana had a *Shiqdar*, an *Amin*, a *Qazi* and a number of clerks and treasurers. Their functions remained practically the same as under Sher Shah with the only change that the judicial functions of the *Amin* were now transferred to the *Qazi*.

Each pargana consisted of a number of villages. The Government officers usually did not come in very close contact with the village-folk. They only realized the taxes and left the people free to manage their affairs through their *panchayats*. The Tax collectors utilized the services of *Muqaddams*, *Chaudhris* and Zamindars in realizing taxes and therefore tried to keep them loyal and satisfied. As a preventive against theft, dacoity and murder police outposts were established in convenient centres and they were instructed to mobilise local support in apprehending and rounding up thieves, dacoits and other unsocial elements to bring them to book. Higher officers occasionally went on tours and heard and redressed or promised to redress grievances of peasants.

Beside the sarkar, pargana and village there is reference also to *mahals*, *chaklas*, ports, towns, forts and military outposts in relation to the local Government. *Mahals* were probably associated with collection of taxes and a pargana seems to have been divided into a number of *mahals* each under a separate collector to facilitate speedy collection. *Chaklas* are first heard of in the reign of Shahjahan. These also seem to have been units of revenue collection and might have referred to areas placed under a *Karori*. Ports were managed by *Mutsaddis* while ordinary towns were under *Kotwals*. Important forts and frontier outposts were placed under *Faujdar*s.

Officials of the province, sarkar and pargana were appointed by the central Government and were transferred after a limited number of years. There was a regular machinery of supervision and control and secret and public intelligence staff kept the centre regularly informed about their movements. If a complaint was made against them which on enquiry was found to be correct, severe action was taken against them. The Em-

Relation between
the centre and the
provinces

peror and persons specially deputed by him made periodical tours of the provinces and heard complaints and grievances of local people. Sometimes representatives of the people also addressed complaints to higher authorities and on that basis orders for warning, transfer or dismissal could be issued. In order to keep himself posted upto date about conditions in provinces, the *dak-chaukis* of the time of Sher Shah were further extended and with their aid the Emperor was able to secure information even about the most distant provinces within 6 or 7 days at the most. The extension of Sher Shah's dyarchical system in the pargana and the sarkar to the province facilitated the exercise of more effective control over the provinces by the centre.

Despite all this care, people could still be subjected to misrule and oppression. If the *Subadar* or the *Faujdar* kept the local news-writer satisfied by his conduct the latter suppressed or watered down his faults. Because of long distance from the centre, information about tyranny or oppression often reached the capital only after the mischief had been done. Enquiry on the spot took time and local discontent could be allayed so that it could be made to appear that no real hardship had been done. The committee of enquiry could also be seduced by various methods to write a favourable report. When this is possible even in the age of wireless communication and air travel, conditions in medieval India can well be imagined. We can only say, that in theory, the Emperors of Delhi had made a provision that might mend or end rebellion, oppression, injustice and lawlessness. But in practice the system did not always work. Aurangzeb once remonstrated with Azam why he did acts for which he had to receive complaints. At another time he complains why the duties of intelligence had been assigned to a person who could not act with impartiality. This gives an insight as to the extent to which central control could go. Then there were provinces where nobody wanted to go. The governors of such provinces were generously treated and given much latitude which made them bold. There were very frequent complaints against the governors of Kabul, Bengal, Gujerat and the Deccan. But if the Emperor and his ministers were to take cognizance of them, it would have been impossible to carry on the Government at all. Thus the large extent of the empire, coupled with slow means of communication often rendered it difficult to exercise effective control over the provinces.

Shivaji did not get sufficient time to put the Government on a sound basis. But in spite of that, he paid some attention to every branch and aspect of it. His empire was constantly growing when he suddenly passed away before the Carnatic had been thoroughly subjugated. The territory described as the *Swaraj* was divided into three parts. The northern part

Provincial and local
Government under
the Marathas

from Surat to Poona was held by the Peshwa, Moro Trimbak Pingle. The southern part including the coastal region and the Konkan south of Bombay was governed by Annaji Pant Datto, the *Sachiva*. The third region, comprising Satara, Kolhapur, Belgaum and Dhariwar had been entrusted to Dattaji Trimbak, the *Mantri*. They were all called *Sar-Karkuns*.

Below them were Karkuns and Subadars but their function and jurisdiction has not been properly defined. According to one version each *Subadar* held land worth one lakh rupees a year. Shivaji's annual income other than from *Chauth* amounted to 3½ crores of rupees. This would suggest that the number of *Subadars* was about 350. In Shivaji's local administration, forts occupied a place of pride. Their number is estimated to have been 240. It is, therefore, likely, that the number of *Subadars* also might have been the same and each fort and its environs might have been under the administrative and military control of the *Havaladar* while the responsibility for law and order depended on the *Karkun*, and for tax-collection on the *Subadar*. Or it may be that the same person was called *Karkun* according as he was engaged in tax-collection or maintaining law and order.

The *Karkuns* and *Havalgars* of forts acted under the general control of the *Sar-karkun* of the area and it was the duty of the latter to minister to their needs. But they were all appointed by the *Chhatrapati* himself. Brahmins were usually appointed as *Subadars*. In each fort there were three officers of more or less equal status viz (1) *Havaladar*, (2) *Sarnaubat* and (3) *Sabnis*. Out of these the *Sabnis* was also a Brahmin. But the *Havaladar* and *Sarnaubat* were Marathas of good family. Shivaji had made detailed rules about the defence of forts, one of which prescribed that it could be surrendered only by a unanimous decision of all the three officers. The *Havaladar* was the administrative head and looked after the internal management of the fort. He was also responsible for its defence but it was the *Sarnaubat* who controlled and led the forces posted there in time of war. The *Sabnis* looked after the finances, correspondence and stores. He was assisted by a *Karkhanis* who belonged to the Kayastha community. Thus the special talents of different castes were utilized in the service of the state and their mutual jealousy served as a check on any of them from straying from the path of duty. Shivaji had impressed on all commanders of forts that just as the mother tended the infant to maturity, similarly, the forts would nurse the infant Maratha state to power. Hence the defence of the fort by all possible means was as sacred a duty as to defend one's own mother against falling into the hands of the enemy.

Shivaji did not grant *jagirs* to his officers. His soldiers and commanders were not allowed to deal directly with the peasant. Either he paid them in cash or by assignment on the revenue

of a specified place. In the latter case, he was to receive the stipulated amount from the local *Karkun*. If anybody owned some land that too was not made rent-free in lieu of salary. On the other hand the revenue was deducted from his salary and the balance paid to him. But after the death of Shivaji this wholesome practice was given up and under the *Peshwas* almost every military captain held a *jagir* of his own and usually evaded paying anything to the centre out of its revenues. Since then dates the financial worries of the Maratha state and forces of disintegration began to gain momentum.

In the reign of Akbar, local government of an ever expanding empire was organised as best as possible. The same arrangement

Mughal—Maratha
Institutions
compared

persisted upto the time of Aurangzeb with only minor adjustments here and there. It therefore acquired strength and vitality. But the Marathas had no such opportunities.

Hence their local institutions were destroyed before they acquired maturity and strength and after the war of liberation (1682-1707) local leaders became so powerful that they totally eclipsed the central authority and made it dependent for its existence on their contributions. The Timurids were not so positively hostile to awarding *jagirs* as Shivaji. Shivaji organised his kingdom on a military basis and made the army paramount but he did not sacrifice the interests of the peasantry. But among the Timurids the government did not become correspondingly militaristic despite the adoption of the *mansabdari* system. The Maratha government was considerably influenced by Muslim political institutions of the north and the south and most of their officers bore Persian titles. During the time of Shivaji control by the centre was quite effective because of his personality and the limited extent of his territory. But it became impossible to maintain similar control later. The Mughal government also largely depended for its success on the personality of the Emperor and that is why ever since the last decades of the 17th century when control by the centre began to lax lawlessness followed.

During the early years of Akbar, Ali Quli Khan-i-Zaman won great renown. He had been appointed governor of Sambhal,

Some notable
governors

an area which still contained many powerful Afghan pockets. The success of Hemu had encouraged them to lead repeated attacks against Mughal authority but Khan-i-Zaman hurled them back each time and seized Jaunpur and Lucknow. Finally the descendants of Sher Shah lost heart and Sher Shah II renounced all political ambitions. But Khan-i-Zaman being very vain and arrogant ultimately brought about his downfall. During the same reign Todar Mal in Gujerat and Mansingh in Bengal and Orissa acquired great fame. Todar Mal set right the finances of Gujerat and removed the evil effects of war while Man Singh

suppressed the Afghan rebels and showed much diplomatic acumen in mobilising local support in Orissa. Under Shahjahan, Ali Mardan was regarded as a very efficient administrator and secured a *mansab* of 7000 and the title of *Amir-ul-Umara*. He built the Shalimar garden and cut a canal from the Ravi for its irrigation. This ultimately proved beneficial to local agriculture as well. Another capable governor of this reign was the Emperor's third son Aurangzeb who with the assistance of Murshid Quli Khan introduced land reforms, counteracted the evil consequences of war and set the finances of the province on a sound basis. In the reign of Aurangzeb, Raja Jay Singh proved a very efficient governor. The author of *Maasir-ul-umara* says, "He was famed for his good judgment and powers of administration and he was also fully conversant with military technique. He had much tact, and it was due to this fact that from the beginning of his career to the end of his life he lived with a good reputation and continually got promotions." "Mirza Raja had a strong sense of loyalty and he employed his administrative, military and diplomatic talents always in the service of his master. Even then he came under the suspicion of the Emperor and did not die in happy circumstances." His greatest success was achieved against Shivaji but the Emperor did not avail of it in the manner the Raja had desired. These able governors rendered great services to the empire.

CHAPTER XXII.

MILITARY ORGANISATION

The mediæval age was an age of empires. And empires subsist on depriving others of their liberties and keeping them in fetters as long as possible. For this a strong army is the main desideratum. Even if imperialism be inspired by noble intentions of improving the lot of the common man, opposition by elements whose selfish interests have suffered is quite natural and for the suppression of this opposition again armed might of the state is necessary. Even if internal peace could be secured and further conquests abjured, the danger of invasion by one's neighbours imposes the necessity of keeping the defence organisation of the land intact. The Timurid emperors of India always entertained the ambition of attaining to wider and still wider limits. Their north-western frontier was always in a state of ferment. Inside the land, the fire of insurrection and revolt was kept ever burning by Afghans, Rajputs, Uzbegs, Sikhs, Marathas *etc.* Even where there was no actual rebellion such elements were present as would seize the first opportunity to stir up trouble if they had the slightest prospect of success. It was, therefore, necessary for these emperors to raise a large army and keep it in a state of perfect readiness. This work was first initiated by Akbar while his successors kept the reformed machinery intact making only a few changes here and there.

But the accounts that have come down to us are not specific and precise in respect of all important aspects of the problem while in certain matters opinions among experts are sharply divided. We may therefore be content with only a tentative account till more specific information is forthcoming.

The armed forces of the Mughals were divided into five principal classes: (1) Cavalry, (2) Elephantry, (3) Infantry, (4) Artillery and matchlockmen and (5) naval or river craft.

These in their turn had a number of groups or categories within them. Thus Abul Fazl mentions 6 categories of cavalry troops. These were:

(1) *Contingents supplied by tributary Rajas and Chiefs* according to the terms of their submission. These troops were not subject to the rule of branding.

(2) *Mansabdari troops* which were subject to regulations regarding (*dagh*), descriptive rolls (*chehra*) and muster.

(3) *Ahadis*, the pick of the Mughal soldiery who were the personal contingent of the Emperor and had a separate commander of their own.

(4) *Barwardi* who were skilled soldiers but who could not maintain good horses on account of poverty and were therefore not subject to branding and were employed as armed police to assist in rent collection and rounding up bad characters.

(5) *Dakhili* whose horses were branded but who were not attached to any *mansabdar* and who were usually sent with *mansabdars* who maintained no contingents of their own.

(6) *Kumaki*. These were auxiliaries whose services were temporarily lent to certain *mansabdars* at the time of war who needed to be reinforced by additional troops.

Cavalry troopers were also subdivided on the basis of quality of their horses which in the reign of Akbar had been grouped into seven categories viz., *Arab*, *Persian*, *Mujannas*, *Turki*, *Yabu*, *Tazi* and *Jangla*. Most of the horses in the Indian army were *Tazi* or *Turki*. After the death of Akbar, cavalry troops came to be distinguished on the basis of number of horses maintained by them. e. g. *do aspa* (having two horses) and *seh-aspa* (having three horses). These were better esteemed than the troops with a single mount and were paid at a higher rate. Similarly, the salary of the trooper varied according to the quality of his horse. Thus under Akbar a trooper with a *Turki* horse got Rs. 20/- while that with a *Tazi* got only Rs. 15/-

Similarly, there were seven categories of elephants each of which was subject to branding. Their allowances varied according to their grade or quality. Thus the best grade elephant called *Mast* received 1320 dams (Rs 33) per month while the last grader *Mokal* got only 280 dams (Rs 7) per month.

The Infantry was also divided into a number of classes. Some of them were mere camp-followers and menial servants. Some of them were employed as grooms, sappers, tent-men etc. But they contained real fighters as well. Among this class fell archers, musketeers, fencers, wrestlers, gladiators etc. who were particularly useful in hand-to-hand fighting and in garrisoning forts.

Guns and cannon were of different sizes and mobility. Some were such heavy pieces as required balls weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ mds while others took much smaller ones weighing between 5 to 10 seers. The *gajnals* were hauled up by elephants while lighter pieces

could be carried on the back of a camel. The gunners manning these pieces of different sizes and quality and the musketeers formed the artillery branch of the India army.

The Mughal navy was hardly worth the name and principally consisted of mere river craft. Naval construction or armament was not quite upto the mark and the Mughal navy could never be a match to any naval power, Indian or foreign. This was the weakest limb of the Mughal army.

During this period, the *mansabdari* troops formed the backbone of the Mughal army and the security of the empire and the success of its foreign policy depended on their efficiency and merit. Most of the reforms of this period therefore relate to them. It was Akbar again who founded the Mughal mansabdari system. Abdul Fazl says that on the basis of the numerical value of the letters forming the word Allah (1 plus 30 plus 5), the Emperor fixed 66 grades of military officers. But in his account of *mansabdars* he refers to only 33 grades. But the numbers do not matter so much as the basis of classification. In Akbar's days the lowest *mansabdar* was a commander of 10 and the highest originally of 10,000. But *mansabs* above 5,000 were assigned only to royal princes. Later the Emperor raised *mansab* of Salim to 12,000 and of Mirza Shah Rukh, Aziz Koka and Man Singh to 7,000. After the death of Akbar the highest *mansab* for people outside the royal family remained stationary at 7,000 but that of the princes rose to 40,000 under Jahangir and 60,000 under Shahjahan. The Special status of Asaf Khan under Shahjahan as father-in-law of the regnant sovereign secured for him the unprecedented *mansab* of 9,000.

In the beginning of Akbar's reign there is a reference only to a single figure in relation to the *mansab* and there is no mention of *Zat* or *Sawar*. But during the last years of his reign, a *mansab* was designated by reference to *Zat* and *Sawar*. What do these terms exactly signify? No unanimity of views has been reached and there are almost as many different interpretations as there are interpreters of our basic authorities. Abul Fazl's statement that Dakhili troops are attached to mansabdars having no troops of their own suggests that there is no inevitable relationship between the numerical strength of a *mansab* and the actual number of troops maintained by an officer. He also says that a mansabdar of 100 was of 11 categories based on difference in salary proportionate to the number of troops actually maintained by him. This suggests that the *Zat* figure indicated only the grade of an officer and for determining the

salary payable to him and he was put in one of the various categories within the grade based on the *Sawar* figure. Abul Fazl also says that all officers holding a *mansab* of 5000 or less were divided into three classes on the basis of relationship between the *Zat* and the *Sawar* figures. If the *Zat* and *Sawar* figures were equal—4000 *Zat*, 4000 *Sawar*—the officer belonged to the first class. If the *Sawar* figure was more than half of the *Zat* figure—4000 *Zat*, 2500 *Sawar*—he belonged to the second class and if it was less than half *Zat*,—4000, 1500 *Sawar* he was put into the third class. There was some variation in the salary on the basis of class. Thus the salary of 4000^{ers} was Rs. 22,000/-, 21,800/- and 21,600/- respectively as they belonged to the first, second or third class. Thus during this latter period there are only three classes within a certain grade.

It has further been enquired as to what was the actual strength of the contingent maintained by *mansabdar* and whether his *Zat* and *Sawar* figures give any indication of them and, if so, what. This too is a matter of keen controversy. What is positively known may be stated as under :—

(1) Most of the government employees were brought on the military pay roll and adjusted in the *mansabdari* system according to the salary they were drawing. If for instance, a storekeeper in charge of royal carpets drawing a salary of Rs. 100/- P. M. was to be placed in the *mansabdari* system, he was put down as a commander of 10 whose salary also was Rs. 100/- P. M. There were thus many people like cooks, storekeepers, treasurers, authors, physicians, poets, painters *etc.* who had nothing to do with fighting or soldiers but who were shown on paper as *mansabdari* when they were brought on the military pay roll. This means that many civilian employees of the state technically described as *mansabdars* had no soldiers under them and maintained no complement of horses, elephants *etc.* relative to their grade.

(2) There were some *mansabdars* who were fit for military service but maintained no soldiers of their own and were supplied *Dakhili* troops at the time of war. This suggests that military commanders also had no contingents in certain special cases. As an illustration of this Abul Fazl says that a *mansabdar* of 100 having no contingent drew a salary of Rs. 500/P. M. while others got Rs. 20/- extra for each unit of 10 soldiers maintained by them. Thus one who maintained 60 soldiers, got Rs. 500 plus $60 \times 20 = \text{Rs. } 620/$.

10

(3) The *Padshahanama* says that in the reign of Shahjahan but of 115 *panjsadis* (500^{ers}) only 6 maintained a full complement of 500 troops while there were many who had only 50.

He further says that the Emperor had therefore made a rule that if a *mansabdar* held his *jagir* in the same province in which he was employed he should furnish a contingent equal to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the *Zat* figure. This was to be reduced to $\frac{1}{4}$ if the *jagir* lay in an another province and to $\frac{1}{5}$ if he had been deputed to serve outside India. Thus a *mansabdar* of 3000 would furnish 1000, 750 and 600 soldiers respectively.

The above description clearly suggests that the *Zat* or the *Sawar* figures give no indication of the number of troops a *mansabdar* actually maintained or was expected to maintain. According to Badaoni, no *mansabdar* maintained the number of troops he was expected to do. We may therefore draw the following tentative conclusion on the basis of a critical evaluation of the available data.

(1) In the beginning of Akbar's reign, when the *mansabdari* system was started each officer was expected to maintain the same number of troops as was indicated by his grade.

(2) It was later discovered that most people were guilty of not maintaining the requisite number. Therefore regulations about muster, branding and descriptive rolls were adopted and salaries of the *mansabdars* and their contingents were computed on the basis of records in the *Bakhshi's* office prepared at the time of the muster. These records contained details about name, parentage, age, height, identification marks *etc.* of each soldier. A similar record about his mount was also maintained. The empire badly needed good soldiers. Hence all *mansabdars* were granted a sort of bonus at the rate of Rs. 2/- per soldier over and above their salary in the grade. Later the number of classes within a grade was reduced to 3 and revised salaries for three classes were introduced.

(3) In the reign of Shahjahan, irregularities of *mansabdars* considerably increased. Many people maintained much smaller contingents than the prescribed ones. Thus there was a serious threat to the security of the empire. Hence, it was laid down that each *mansabdar* must furnish a minimum of $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{5}$ soldiers of his *Zat* figure according to the location of his *jagir* and place of service and should bring them for inspection at the appointed time. Some people needed the services of soldiers only seasonally and, therefore, appointed them for a much shorter period. This too was kept in view at the time of fixation of the salaries.

(4) In the reign of Aurangzeb, there was no question of being sent abroad. Besides, the *mansabdars* were either paid in cash or their *jagirs* were each time transferred to their place of service. He therefore made a general rule that all military commanders should maintain a contingent equal to at least $\frac{1}{4}$ of their *mansab*.

There was a general schedule of salaries of *mansabdars*. Each *mansab* was subdivided into three classes and separate salaries were fixed for each class. But nobody was ever paid the full amount shown in the schedule. The salary of each officer as shown in the schedule also included the cost of maintaining a prescribed number of horses, elephants, camels *etc.* Hence civilian officers who maintained none of these were paid only after the relative deductions had been made. Salaries of military officers as shown in the schedule according to their grade and class were reduced by the difference between the cost of maintaining the prescribed and the actual complements of horses camels *etc.* under them. It was also taken into account for how many months in the year he actually maintained his contingent. This settled their personal emoluments. Then on the basis of personal competence of their soldiers and the quality and number of horses maintained by them the monthly salary of each soldier was fixed. It was also determined for how many months in the year he must be paid. On this basis the cost of maintaining his entire contingent was calculated. This was added to the salary due to him and he was assigned a *jagir* to cover this total amount. But if he was paid in cash, the payment was made only for periods of six months at a time at the expiry of which he was to bring his soldiers for muster to secure renewal of his grant. Some *mansabdars* were paid special allowances for maintaining better horses or for any other meritorious service.

The *mansabdars* did not always conform to rules. If they were posted away from the centre they did not maintain the full complement of soldiers but continued to charge for the whole contingent. When the time for muster came, they found excuses for evading it or for not bringing their full complement. Sometimes they secured postponements by bribing the officers concerned and there were instances of *mansabdars* continuing to draw their salaries without bringing their contingents for muster for as many as 12 years. Even when they did come they brought temporary recruits and borrowed horses in order to satisfy the department of the *Bakhshi* and have their salaries approved. Sometimes, the same person or horse was shown to belong to a number of contingents turn by turn. There were also complaints of non-payment or short payment to the troops. All these defects came to the surface in the time of Akbar himself and he took a number of steps to remove them.

The first thing he did was to make surprise visits and hold inspections at the spot. All cases of disregard of rules were severely punished. He also made a rule that every *mansabdar*

must bring his contingent for inspection at least once a year. Those who proved defaulters were sometimes temporarily removed from service or their *jagirs* were reduced. But as soon as he made compliance with rules, he was generally restored to his post. He also instituted the practice of maintaining *huliya* or *chehra i. e.* descriptive rolls of all soldiers. At the time of the next muster, a comparison was made with these records and his salary approved only when there was no discrepancy. This checked corruption. The third rule he made was that every horse should bear a mark which was branded on its thigh. This prevented exchange of horses. But some *mansabdars* resorted to mutual borrowings. This was prevented by assigning a particular mark for each *mansabdar* and branding it on the left thigh while the imperial mark appeared on the right one. Some *mansabdars* forged these brands and made improper use of them. Hence descriptive rolls and weight of the horse were also recorded. These marks were also changed from time to time. Newswriters and members of the intelligence staff were specially instructed to keep an eye over the *mansabdars* and report any irregularities that might come to their notice. Those who were stationed at court and did not require the services of soldiers were exempted from the responsibility of maintaining troops and a number of troops were centrally recruited and maintained to be supplied to such *mansabdars* when they were given any military assignment. Those who did not maintain troops for the whole year suffered a diminution in their *jagirs*. Thus Akbar made strenuous efforts to improve the army but he did not meet with complete success and some defects persisted till the very end.

Mansabdari troops were recruited by the *mansabdar* himself. In those days, caste prejudices were fairly strong and it was generally noticed that the soldiers fought with much greater zeal and vigour under a commander of their own caste than otherwise. Appointment, tenure and salary of troops It was therefore not possible for the Emperor to recruit the army himself and distribute it over the empire according to his will and depute any officers he liked to command it. He therefore, took the next best step of laying down general rules for recruitment, maintenance, discipline and payment of troops and left it to individual *mansabdars* to recruit and maintain their respective contingents according to the above rules. The advantage in this system was that suitable members of all classes and communities got an opportunity to enter the army and the centre was relieved of the responsibility to maintain day-to-day control over them. But the greatest drawback in this arrangement was that the soldier regarded himself as the servant of the *mansabdar* alone and if perchance he got killed in course of fighting, they refused to take orders from anybody else and

usually disengaged and fled. Secondly, under this arrangement the advantages of a standing army were considerably reduced because the *mansabdar* paid their troops only for $4\frac{1}{2}$ to 10 months in the year and that too not very regularly. That is why many *mansabdari* troops were mere novices.

There was no provision for regular parades. The only means of acquiring military training was employment in hunting, suppression of revolts or actual war. Therefore, the soldiers deputed in a province generally peaceful, got slack and indolent. Non-payment of regular salaries forced the soldiers to oppress the local people and not unoften those who were supposed to be the guardians of law and order were found to be secretly allied with bad characters and unsocial elements. In one of the instrument of instructions to a new entrant into service, Aurangzeb specifically warns him not to act in collusion with dacoits and accept bribes from them lest other lawless elements might be emboldened to disregard the law and seek his protection by bribing him.

Salaries of soldiers were fairly low. As each soldier was expected to bring his own horse and weapons, his salary varied according to the quality of his horse. One who held an *Iraqi* horse got the highest salary of Rs 30/- while a trooper with a *Jangla* horse received only Rs 12/- out of which Rs 6/- was supposed to be the cost of maintaining his horse.

Among the infantry, musketeers were rated the highest and received 300 *dams* a month. A rupee was first equal to 35 *dams* but later its value was raised to 40 *dams*. His salary was thus equal to Rs $7\frac{1}{2}$. The lowest salary paid to a beginner among musketeers was about Rs 3/- p.m.

Shamsherbazes (fencers) were employed on Rs 2/- p.m. but the best among them received as much as Rs 15/- p.m. They acted as commanders of other *Shamsherbazes*. Similarly there were some *pahalwans* (wrestlers and gladiators) whose salary ranged from 70 *dams* a month to 450 *dams*.

The best-paid soldiers in the Mughal army were the *Ahadis*. They owed their origin to Akbar and were the personal followers of the Emperor. A high nobleman was incharge of recruiting them. The pick of *mansabdars* troops recommended for imperial service by their commanders or offering themselves at their own initiative were first interviewed and tested by him and those found suitable were presented before the Emperor. Then the Emperor examined them and indicated his preferences. These were now subjected to a thorough enquiry and those that were found suitable in respect of military skill, moral qualities and family history, were once more presented before the Emperor along with the necessary reports. If the Emperor indicated

Abadis

his approval, they were appointed and their salaries were immediately raised, the maximum for really competent persons of merit being Rs. 500/- p.m. They regarded themselves as the servants of the crown alone and would not serve under any *mansabdar*. That is why they were called *Ahadis*, i.e. recognizing the authority of only a single person. They had a separate *Diwan* and *Bakhshi* and maintained as many as eight horses which according to Abul Fazl was later reduced to a maximum of five.

There is divergence of opinion even about the exact strength of the Mughal army. Blochmann thought that it could

Strength of the Imperial army	not have numbered more than 25,000. But others put the figure into lakhs. In this connection, certain things are almost undisputed. The <i>Ahadis</i> numbered 7,000 to 8,000 while the number of war-elephants was in the neighbourhood of 5,000. Good musketeers numbered about 40,000 and the number of troops under princes and <i>mansabdars</i> ranged between two to four lakhs. It is recorded about the year 1647 that 2 lakh troopers were brought for muster and branding that year, besides these there were 8,000 <i>mansabdars</i> 7,000 <i>Ahadis</i> , 40,000 gunners and sappers and 1,85,000 <i>tabinan</i> . i.e. permanent soldiers recruited by the centre but not included in the contingents of princes, nobles or <i>mansabdars</i> . In the reign of Aurangzeb, the <i>mansabdars</i> numbered 14,500 which suggests that there must have been a corresponding increase in the strength of the troops maintained by them. But the cavalry force which always remained with the Emperor and could be employed at will did not usually exceed 50,000 which might have been the number under Akbar as well, because, according to Monserrate the strength of such troops at the time of the Kabul campaign was 45,000. The infantry is said to have numbered 40 lakhs but as this figure included also <i>Kahars</i> , sweepers, <i>bhishtis</i> , sappers, grooms and all other grades of menial and personal servants the number of effective soldiers in this group must have been much smaller.
-------------------------------	---

The navy	The weakest arm of the Mughal armed forces was the navy. In Bengal and the Punjab some boats were maintained which were employed in crossing rivers and suppressing riverine dacoits. The larger boats in Bengal were fitted with guns and the Bengal navy was in a much better condition than usual under Shuja and Mir Jumla. But in relation to the extent and needs of the empire the boats were of little naval importance.
----------	--

The Emperors do not seem to have adequately realized its importance. Foreign traders came to their court but that did not inspire them with a desire to send their envoys and traders abroad or maintain their sovereignty over Indian territorial waters intact. Representatives of a petty state like Portugal

intercepted *Haj* pilgrims from among his subjects and subjected them to great indignities, sometimes even selling them away as slaves. But none of the Emperors did anything to destroy their power. Instead of allying himself with the Sultan of Turkey to drive them out of India and thus prevent them from taking part in political intrigues, Akbar talked of attacking Turkey in alliance with the Portuguese. Failing to protect *Haj* pilgrims, he imposed restriction on their going by sea. Aurangzeb drove the English out of Bengal but later allowed them to come back on their guaranteeing protection to *Haj* pilgrims. He does not seem to have realized how humiliating it was to propitiate the foreigner on failing to protect one's subjects against that foreigner. He enrolled the Sidi of Janjira, a pirate chief among his *mansabdars* to secure his services in protecting the *Haj* pilgrims. But neither he nor his more famous great grandfather did anything to develop their navy. This proved to be one of the principal reasons why the empire later broke up and a foreign empire took its place.

The most efficient part of the Mughal army was stationed at the capital and it usually stirred out only when he went out campaigning. They included the *Ahadis*, *Dakhilis*, *Shamsherbazes*, musketeers, sappers etc. Defence of the capital was entrusted only to highly skilled soldiers. The rest of the army was scattered all over the empire. In each sarkar and province the *Faujdar* and the governor maintained a contingent for the maintenance of peace and security within his jurisdiction. Then there were forts of outstanding importance. Their care was entrusted to *Faujders* with special powers. Similarly, a substantial portion of the army was stationed in frontier outposts on the Kabul-Peshawar route, and to keep the frontier tribesmen under his control, the Emperor maintained a large force on the north-western frontier under competent generals who were posted as *Faujders* there. One such was the 7000^{er} Maharaja Jaswant Singh at Jamrud.

When a large army was needed for purposes of conquest, suppression of rebellion or beating back foreign invasion, the *Mir Bakhshi* summoned appropriate *mansabdars* and Rajas to come with their respective contingents according to the nature of circumstances. On special occasions fresh recruits were also enlisted on a temporary basis and were later discharged when their services were no longer needed.

Wherever large contingents were stationed, they were usually placed within the protective walls of forts. There were many forts during this period which were noted for their strategic position and impregnability throughout the country. Chief among these were Rohtas, Chunar, Allahabad, Kalinjar,

Importance of
forts

Ranthambhor, Ajmer, Gwalior, Delhi, Lahore, Qandahar, Kabul, Asirgarh, Daulatabad, Aurangabad, Bijapur and Golkunda. All precautions were taken for the defence of these forts as in the middle ages forts played a very important part in the life of the state. They had large stores of foodgrains, ammunition and other essential supplies so that in case of an emergency a handful of men stationed within them could keep the enemy at bay for long periods and thus arrest the possibility of disintegration of the empire. These forts were thus useful both for defence and offence. Forts were also utilized for quartering the troops during rains. Some forts like Gwalior, Asirgarh or Daulatabad were used for housing important political prisoners.

All care was therefore taken to strengthen and adequately provision these forts. With this object in view, they were surrounded by ditches filled with water, fitted with guns and provided cover to archers and gunners within the fort in such wise that they might command full view of the enemy and freely rain death on him from within.

A reference has already been made to some defects of the army. We have noticed how the central standing army Weaknesses in the at the capital was inadequate for meeting Defence organisa. the needs of a vast and growing empire. On tion of the empire all critical occasions, the Emperor had to lean on the support of his *mansabdars* and vassals. Secondly, although the state paid for the maintenance of troops, it had no direct control over them. As the salary was paid through the *mansabdar* the soldier looked upon him as his real master. Absence of direct control of the sovereign led to many serious handicaps. No provision could be made for effective training, the horses and equipment of soldiers were not always quite upto the mark and the army was seldom paid its dues in full. This led to mutinous conditions in provincial contingents. The income of the *mansabdars* was very high while the general standard of morality among the aristocracy was rather low. Hence the *mansabdars* in imitation of their masters carried with them a troop of wives, concubines and their attendants. The presence of this army of non-combatants acted as a great lag on the speed and efficiency of the army and the problem of supplies became more acute. Foreign travellers have remarked that when the imperial army went out on an expedition it resembled the progress of a gay procession or presented the sight of a colourful city in majestic motion. Such an army could not meet the onslaughts of Persians, Marathas, Bundelas or Sikhs. The better type of soldiers in the imperial army knew only one method of attack, a violent cavalry charge against the ranks of the enemy with a view to smash up its line and turn the flank and when some confusion or dismay had been created to bring the elephants to action.

But they could not use the artillery as effectively as Babar had done at Panipat or Khanua. Their gunners were not quite efficient while their guns lacked adequate mobility. Heavy cannon needed for siege operations, they could neither manufacture nor import because they had no navy of their own to protect their trade with foreign lands and the foreigners were unwilling to strengthen their hands by supplying them with means of their own destruction. Nor could they use matchlockmen with an effectiveness comparable to that of the European trading companies. They neglected the infantry and laid too much store by cavalry. These latter also were not trained in the later methods of warfare. With the expansion of the empire, it comprised within it hilly, forest-clad, sandy and snow-capped regions as well. But the soldiers were provided with no special training to equip them for war in those regions.

It was by exploiting these weaknesses that Shivaji was able to found an independent kingdom of his own. The military organisation that he set up was free from many such defects. Shivaji's army tended to grow in strength and numbers as his power and resources increased. His army consisted principally of three elements : (1) *Paga*, or personal followers of Shivaji, (2) *Silahdars* that is mercenaries recruited for short periods and (3) Maval infantrymen. Besides, he possessed some guns which were employed mostly for the defence of forts. Guns were sometimes used in open warfare and the heavier pieces were hauled up by elephants. In Shivaji's military strategy elephants had little utility. But according to Sabhasad, by the time of his death the number of his elephants had risen to 1260.

Sarkar says that the number of the *Paga* originally was only 1200 but by 1680, it had steadily increased to 45000. Similarly, the *Silahdars* that co-operated with him in the earlier stages numbered only 2,000 but their number later rose to 60,000. In the same manner, the infantry rose from 10,000 to 1,00,000. From this it may safely be concluded that after 1670-1671 the *Paga* troops must have numbered about 35,000. These were employed in raids on all sides and as they were generally successful and profitable, many semi-independent chiefs also allied themselves with him and brought in their troops as auxiliaries and agreed to abide by his instructions and direction. These too must have numbered about 50,000. The infantry was almost exclusively employed for garrisoning forts which numbered about 240. Each fort had a garrison of 500 or so. Thus the army stationed in them totalled over a lakh.

Shivaji had organised the whole army under graded officers. A *Havaldar* commanded 25 *Paga* troopers, a *Jumladar* commanded 5

Havaldars, a *Hazari* to *Jumladars* and a *Panjhazari* five *Hazaris*.

Internal organisation of the cavalry The *Panj-hazaris* had a *Sarnaubat* over them as the chief commander of *Paga* troops.

The *Silahdars* were also organised on similar lines but they had their own officers in the lower rungs while at the top they too had to submit to the authority of the *Sarnaubat* of *Pagas*.

The Infantry troops of Shivaji were highly efficient and many of his signal victories were the outcome of their heroic exploits. They too were organised under a hierarchy of graded officers. A *Naik* commanded 9 *paiks* (foot-soldiers), a *Havaldar* commanded 5 *Naiks*, 2 or 3 *Havaldars* were commanded by a *Jumladar* and 10 *Jumladars* by a *Hazari* while the *Sarnaubat* commanded 7 *Hazaris*. The entire infantry and cavalry force was headed by the *Senapati* while the *Chhatrapati* was the Commander-in-Chief of the entire armed might of the kingdom.

The success of Shivaji was largely due to the excellent services of his scouts and spies. They were under the control and direction of Bahirji Nayak Jadhav. They were familiar with every inch of Maharashtra and knew many secret routes. They could assume different disguises according to the exigencies of the hour and possessed a working knowledge of many languages. Many of them were very fleet-footed and they travelled back with useful military intelligence to their base with such speed that the enemy was often taken aback and caught napping.

The financial resources of Shivaji being limited, he could not afford to pay his soldiers high salaries. Common foot-soldiers received 1 to 3 rupees a month while the cavalry trooper got 2 to 6½ rupees. Lower grade officers received 15 to 35 rupees a month. The *Hazaris* of the infantry and the cavalry got Rs. 150/- and Rs. 300/- p. m. respectively. The salaries of other officers were in proportion to these. But every one got his salary in cash and at the due date. Sometimes assignments on revenue were also made but in no case was a *jagir* allowed to any military officer.

Shivaji kept his troops under a rigorous discipline, and all cases of disobedience or wilful neglect were punished in an exemplary fashion. The transgressing officer was often discharged from service.

Discipline, control and rewards His soldiers had strict orders under pain of severe penalties not to maltreat women, children, the infirm and the aged, scriptures and places of worship. A soldier found in the company of a prostitute or a concubine was punished with death. Shivaji's scrupulous regard for discipline is evidenced by one of his letters of the year 1673 addressed to the *Jumladars*, *Havaldars* and *Karkuns* of Chiplun. It runs thus :

"I have made arrangements for a cavalry regiment being cantoned at Chiplun.....Owing to the stay of this regiment at Chiplun, all the grain and other necessities.....have been almost exhausted..... I have ordered the officers to collect whatever grain as could be had from the various forts and thus provide for men and horses. Now you will ask for any amount of rations of grain and grass, feed recklessly while the supplies are available, and when these are exhausted during the height of the rainy season, you will get nothing.....Hence the present supplies must be made to last till the end of the rainy season. You must, therefore, without complaint accept whatever rations the *Karkuns* will daily give you and nothing more should be asked; so that all will get tolerably enough to keep men and horses from starving.....No one should enter the store-rooms..... Some will make fires for cooking purposes in places where there are stacks of hay. Some will take live-coal for smoking pipes and carelessly set fire to the stacks lying about. When one shed takes fire, it will soon extend to the whole encampment and cause incalculable damage.....You must all take note of this situation, keep watch in the camp and see that nothing untoward happens, while men are cooking food or burning grass. If you keep lights burning at night, mice might carry away the lighted wick and cause mischief. All such accidents must be scrupulously guarded against.....If you fail, there is an end to all horses and stables and food. Then you will begin to rob the people—the poor peasants will find life impossible and run away. Some will starve. Then they will think you are worse than the Mughals,You have no business to trouble the *rayats*.....Officers should always be going about to see that everything is safe.....We shall keep ourselves informed.....and punish those who disobey....."

During the rainy season, the troops were quartered in cantonments. On the *Dashahara* day or soon after it, they began their raids which were to continue for the next eight months. Before they left their camps, an inventory of personal possessions of each soldier was prepared and a copy of it was deposited with the Government. When the period of fighting was over, the troops returned to the headquarters. During the period of campaign, they were supported by spoils of war. As they approached the frontiers of their homeland, a body-search of each soldier was made and all that was found in excess of his recorded personal property was seized. If there was anything of unusually high price, it was reserved for the treasury of the *Chhatrapati*. The price of the booty captured by individual soldiers was calculated and his salary adjusted against it. Anything in excess of salary was taken from them and in case the booty fell short of salary, the difference was paid out of the royal treasury. All cases of meritorious service were suitably

rewarded and the dependents of those who had been killed or seriously wounded in course of fighting received maintenance allowance from the state.

Shivaji's troops were armed with swords and spears, bows and arrows, muskets and maces, knives and daggers. But few of them had any protective armour. The Military equipment and strategy : foot soldiers often went naked above the waist. Their horses were diminutive in size but capable of great endurance. In a pitched battle against the Mughals, their defeat was almost certain because the latter possessed much heavier cavalry. But the Maratha light cavalry was eminently suited for Shivaji's guerilla tactics. This strategy could be used to the best advantage in a forest-clad hilly region. That is why the armies of Aurangzeb and Adil Shah failed to overpower him.

Shivaji realized the value of a naval force and he sought to build up a navy for the defence of his coastal regions and for the improvement of his foreign trade. But The Maratha Navy his wars did not give him sufficient respite for this, all the same he did make a beginning and collected a naval force consisting of 200 craft of different sizes and fighting capacity. This helped him to carry on a rich coastal trade and to fight against the Portuguese and the Sidi of Janjira. The fighting capacity of his ships was rather low and far inferior to that of the English or Dutch men-of-war. Later the *Peshwas* tried to develop it with Bassein and Vijayadurg as their bases but it never had the strength to eliminate even the Sidi of Janjira, much less the European trading companies. The only result of these measures was that the Maratha sea-coast had some sort of a defence.

Under the *Peshwas*, the army lacked the discipline which Shivaji had strictly enforced. Nor did it receive its salary regularly. The central army became much weaker and Shahu and the *Peshwas* that succeeded him had to depend on the support of their war-lords. The organisation became lax and the sense of cohesion was lost. Formerly the army consisted predominantly of Marathas who were fired with a burning zeal and devotion to Maharashtra. But under the *Peshwas*, the non-Maratha element became preponderant and the Maratha soldier no longer enjoyed the esteem lavished on others. The Marathas and the Deccanis in the army of the *Peshwa* were paid at the rate of Rs. 6/- p. m. while the northerners got Rs. 8/- and the Arabs Rs. 15/- p. m. Thirdly, the *Peshwas* adopted European methods and forsook their own traditions before Europeanisation had been completed. Consequently, the army under the *Peshwas* was no longer as fit an instrument of national defence as the army of Shivaji had been.

Except under Shivaji the armies in the north and the south were dominated by foreign mercenaries which proved harmful to the land in more respects than one. Under Akbar, Uzbegs, Persians and Afghans held high *mansab*. The Mirzas also held high posts. They were all considered intrinsically superior to the people of the land so that whatever might have been the personal opinion of Akbar about the merits of persons like Bhagwan Das, Man Singh or Todarmal they were never given the chief command in any important campaign. Todarmal was in many respects a highly gifted and able commander. None of the generals sent against Daud (Bengal) exhibited valour, perseverance and fortitude comparable to his but he was at no stage entrusted with the chief command. Similar conditions continued under Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb. The rulers of India were under such a spell of superiority of foreigners that they readily regarded them as experts. In the artillery and the navy, foreigners commanded still higher prestige and the Emperors made no serious attempt to train up local men to assume command in place of the so-called foreign experts. Nor did they arrange to depute anybody to foreign lands to acquire training there. Thus any Persian, Turk or Portuguese who had some knowledge of artillery could easily rise to the highest place in Mughal service. These foreigners took no special interest or pride in the progress of India. They had come here only as self-seeking adventurers and it was therefore easy for them to change sides according to convenience. Besides repeated supersession of Indians by foreigners engendered an inferiority complex among them. Sometimes they became so jealous of these foreign upstarts that they desired their discomfiture and humiliation even though it could mean the defeat of the Emperor. Aurangzeb was highly impressed with Turani soldiers and in one of his letters, without losing sight of their inordinate vanity and pride, he remarks that as soldiers they are undoubtedly the best while the Rajputs have been described as foolish and senseless in throwing away their lives lightly. The *Peshwas* recruited northerners and later employed foreign Muslims also. Balaji Bajirao had sought to secure the services of Bussy. Later *Peshwas* employed a number of Frenchmen and made them the arbiters of destiny of their forces. Thus they entrusted their fortunes to the care of those whose only interest in service was self-aggrandisement and who could by no means have any enthusiasm or zeal for the land or the government that had employed them. It was nobles of this class that hastened the ruin of the Timurid empire in India, and one of the principal reasons of the defeat of the Marathas against the British, also, was the denationalisation of the fighting forces.

Akbar and Shivaji in their respective spheres had introduced a number of valuable reforms in the military organisation of the state whose neglect on the part of their successors brought about much laxity. But respect for the foreigner was so universal that even these nation-builders were not free from this taint.

CHAPTER XXIII

FINANCE AND REVENUE

The fiscal policy of the Mughal Empire was entrusted to a separate department headed by the *Diwan-i-Ala* or *Wazir*.

But before Akbar's reforms, conditions were different. Under Humayun, this was distributed over three departments called *Daulat*, *Murad* and *Saadat*. In the early years of Akbar, the *Vakil* also exercised control over the finance department. But when Akbar assumed reins of office himself, he initiated a process of reform, development and reorganisation of different departments. As a result of this reorganisation the entire fiscal policy of the state was put in charge of a single department. It was through this department that the various revenue reform measures were enforced.

The head of the department was called *Diwan-i-Ala*. But for reasons of administrative convenience he appointed a number of officers to assist him and clearly defined their respective duties. Perhaps the most important among them was the *Mustaufi* who acted as the accountant general of the empire. His importance lay in the fact that he looked into the accounts of all departments of state. Another assistant of the *High Diwan* was *Diwan-i-Khalsa* who looked after the management of crown-lands. A third was *Diwan-i-Jagir* who exercised administrative control over *jagirs*. The Fourth was *Diwan-i-Buyutat* who was to look after state factories called the *Karkhanas* and heirless property. A fifth man, called *Taujih* looked into the accounts of the military department. Then there were *Mushrifs* for auditing accounts of different departments, sections or individual *karkhanas*.

Below these principals, there was numerous staff of subordinates of different grades and categories. This department also exercised control over the provincial *Diwan* and the staff under him. All officers dealing with financial matters in forts or sea-ports were also under the control of the Finance Department.

These reforms of Akbar proved very efficacious and the fiscal organisation of the empire became highly efficient and strong. His successors made no important changes in this machinery. Only *Diwan-i-Jagir* came to be called *Diwan-i-tan* and when Jahangir introduced the law of escheats which made

the Emperor heir to the property of all the nobles, the management of such property was entrusted to *Diwan-i-Buyutat*. Akbar had abolished the *Jizya* but Aurangzeb revived it again and appointed a separate staff for collecting it.

The revenue of the state was constantly fluctuating. This was mainly due to three reasons; (1) changes in the territorial limits of the empire, (2) changes in the rate of taxes and (3) changes in taxes raised. Although court-histories of Akbar and his successors furnish detailed accounts of their respective reigns, they have neither separately mentioned the income from different individual taxes nor furnished details of estimated revenue demand and actual collection for any year. However, on the basis of information supplied by them the annual revenue of Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb has been computed at 13½, 22 1/2 and 38 crores respectively. These figures indicate that the Timurid Emperors of India were the wealthiest sovereigns of the contemporary world.

Their revenue was derived from numerous sources, chief among them was land revenue which yielded practically two-thirds of the income. Principal sources of income were *Zakat*, customs, salt-tax, *Khums*, state-trading, mint and currency, *Jizya*, escheats, presents, tolls and octroi, tribute from vassal states and land revenue.

(1) *Zakat*. It was realized only from the Muslims at the rate of 1/40 of their property. It was not to be demanded from the poor. Statements of property as furnished by the people were generally accepted without any enquiry because payment of *Zakat* was an obligation towards God and his people and could not be treated as a tax. The revenue derived from this source was to be utilized only for religious and humanitarian purposes almost exclusively for the benefit of the Muslims.

(2) *Customs duties*. The duty on the imports and exports was 2°/o ad valorem for Muslims and 5°/o for Hindus. This had been the usual rate under the Sultanate of Delhi. There is no mention of Akbar introducing any change in this. It may therefore be concluded that it was always discriminatory in its origin and incidence. In 1667, Aurangzeb exempted the Muslims from it. But when it was complained that Muslims passed on goods of Hindus as their own in consideration of a payment to them so that the state was cheated of its income from the Hindus as well, the Emperor reimposed it on Muslims at the rate of 2°/o while in the case of Hindus the usual 5°/o continued as before. In the reign of Aurangzeb the revenue derived from a single port—Surat—amounted to 12 lakh rupees a year.

(3) *Salt tax.* The Emperor had monopoly rights over the *Salt Range* in the Punjab and *Sambhar Lake* in Rajputana. The revenue derived from salt of these two places went into the central coffers. The state had established similar monopolies over certain other articles such as the indigo and derived some income from them also.

(4) *Khums.* The state had exclusive right over certain mines while those worked by private enterprise paid a tax amounting to $\frac{1}{5}$ of their total annual income. The state received a similar share in treasure-troves and war-booty. All these sources of income were collectively known as the *Khums*.

(5) *State Trading.* The state owned more than 100 *karhanas*. Most of them were located in the capital while the rest were scattered all over the empire. They produced a great variety of articles including scents, fine cloth, luxury goods, war-material, presentation articles, artistic furniture *etc.* These were essentially for consumption by the court, the royal household and departments of state. But all surpluses were marketed and brought some revenue to the state.

(6) *Mint and currency.* As there was a certain percentage of alloy in currency and its face value was higher than its intrinsic cost, some revenue was derived from this source. Minting of coins was occasionally entrusted to contracting goldsmiths.

(7) *Jizya.* *Jizya* had been uniformly imposed on the Hindus in the early medieval age although one author suggests that Alauddin probably wrote it off when he increased the land-tax. It continued to be levied under Babar and Humayun. It continued under Akbar also till the year 1564 when the Emperor abolished it. 115 years later, Aurangzeb revived it in 1679 and appointed a separate staff for its collection. But it was seldom realized from the rural areas and it does not seem to have yielded much revenue. After the death of Aurangzeb, it was once more dropped and all subsequent efforts to revive it proved unavailing because of opposition by Rajputs, Marathas and other Hindus.

(8) *Escheats.* Jahangir had made the state heir to the property of all the nobles. But this did not bring much revenue because most of the nobles lived in such extravagant style that they died in debt and left nothing to be inherited by the state.

(9) *Presents.* There were numerous occasions in the year when the Emperor received valuable presents from his nobles. His counter-gifts were usually less costly so that the balance was in his favour.

(10) *Tolls and Octrois.* The state realized tolls and ferry taxes from passengers by road or river. There was a sales tax

on all sales in the markets. In larger towns octroi was also charged. All these sources brought some revenue to the state.

(11) *Tribute from vassal chiefs*.—There were a number of Rajas and chiefs who paid tribute to the state but in many cases it took the form of supply of military contingents alone. Hence the revenue from this source was not very substantial.

(12) *Land Revenue*. The Emperor was regarded as the legal master of all land within the empire but in practice no farmer was deprived of land under his cultivation. It would therefore, not be improper to hold that real and practical ownership of land vested in the peasant. The peasants in *jagirdari* lands paid taxes to the *jagirdar* in accordance with the state regulations. The land under the direct control of the crown was called *khalsa*. The rent from such lands was realized by salaried officers of the state. The tax payable by peasants in the *Khalsa* and the *jagirdari* land was originally not the same. But Akbar put an end to this discrimination. From both these categories of land the state demand varied from $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$. Then there was some land set apart for the maintenance of religious leaders, saints and learned men or religious establishments. This was rent free grant. All such lands were called *Sayurghals*. A very small percentage of the land paid $\frac{1}{10}$ to $\frac{1}{20}$ of produce because it was treated as *ushri*.

The imperial budget provided for expenses quite in tune with the rich revenues of the state. Akbar is said to have left behind 35 crores of rupees in different treasuries. But Jahangir and Shahjahan turned out to be such spendthrifts that they squandered away most of Akbar's savings. Aurangzeb too found it difficult to balance his budget but even inspite of that the royal treasures had not been thoroughly ransacked till the time of Nadir Shah's invasion of India. By the time of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Emperor had become a pauper and therefore Abdali satisfied his greed by utilizing Mughalani Begam's services in unearthing secret hoards of nobles. The Chief heads of expenditure in the Mughal empire were :—

- (1) Salaries payable to nobles, courtiers, *mansabdars*, *Qazis* and other staff,
- (2) The army budget and the cost of campaigns of conquest.
- (3) The court and the Royal Household.
- (4) Gifts and rewards conferred by the Emperor.
- (5) Cost of building and maintenance of royal buildings forts, mosques, tombs etc.
- (6) Cost of raw material for the *karkhanas*.
- (7) Cost of building and maintenance of roads, bridges, *sarais*, canals etc.

Land revenue formed the back-bone of medieval finance. The rulers derived the largest income from this source and it was on the success of their policy in this Land Revenue Policy field that their popularity among the people largely depended. That is why all great rulers tried to keep their land revenue policy on a sound footing. Among the Timurids, it was Akbar who first paid special attention to this question and the arrangements made by him continued to influence state policy even until the British rule. For proper evaluation of changes introduced by Akbar or his successors it would be worthwhile examining what different problems related to it.

The first important problem relating to land revenue policy was the question of ownership of land. Was the ruler entitled only to a tax in return for guaranteeing security and protection to the tenant who was really the owner of land or whether the whole land belonged to the Emperor and the tenant paid rent for the use of the royal land? The next important question relates to the amount of tax payable by the tenant. This was a very complicated affair, because for determining the propriety or otherwise of a certain rate of payment many things had to be taken into account—fertility of the soil, area of the land cultivated, nature of the crop grown, current market rates, cost of maintenance of the tenant, government expenditure for improvement of agriculture, requirements of the state *etc.* Having determined the amount of tax, the next important question was to fix up the mode of assessment and to derive a means for ascertaining whether a reasonable demand was really being enforced. It had further to be decided whether it should be realized in cash or kind and what should be the correct agency for collection and whether the collection should be seasonal or annual. One had also to decide whether the land should be made *Khalsa* or should be assigned to *jagirdars* in lieu of salary. Should the revenue be realized direct from the tenants or whether there should be some middle-man between the tenant and the government such as the farmer of revenue, Zamindar or Headman? Should those who came in contact with the tenant be allowed certain perquisites at the cost of the tenant or whether the state itself should pay her agents whatever allowance had to be paid? If land under the plough had to be measured who must do it and when and in what manner? What steps should be taken to keep the staff appointed for the above purposes, honest, industrious, obedient, faithful to duty and generous to the people? Where should revenue collections be deposited and what should be done to escort it safely to the capital? In case of total or partial failure of crops, should any remissions in revenue be granted and if so who should have the right of determining it? The demand

should be permanent or whether it is more equitable to change it from time to time? In case of arrears, what should be done to realize them without causing undue inconvenience to the peasant? What should be done to improve the revenues of state?

Akbar took a decision about most of the problems posed above and in doing so he had particular regard for the welfare of the peasant and the revenues of the state. Nature of Akbar's reforms Despite his farsighted vision and extraordinary talents for government, he was unable to tackle all the problems relating to land revenue settlement all at once. He made some mistakes too. But he was ever anxious to rectify them as soon as they came to light. That is why his reforms proved to be of such a lasting value and he acquired great popularity among the people. The chief aims of Akbar were :

- (i) The revenue of the state should be definitely and permanently fixed with sufficient scope for expansion and development.
- (ii) The peasant should be happy and contented and devoted to the crown.
- (iii) Local officers or *Jagirdars* should not be allowed to oppress the peasantry.
- (iv) To devise a permanent land revenue settlement just and flexible in its basis, and smooth and inexpensive in its working.
- (v) To give no quarter to corruption or tyranny but to preserve the legitimate rights of all classes.
- (vi) Everything should be clear and unambiguous so that correct accounting may be possible.
- (vii) As far as possible, there should be no intermediary between the state and the peasant and wherever a middleman did exist his powers and functions should be so defined as to leave no room for mischief or misunderstanding.

According to the accepted traditions of the day, Akbar conceded that the peasant was the true proprietor of his holding and that he had a right only to demand a tax. Reforms of Akbar According to Abul Fazl this right of the king was contingent on due performance of his duty to protect the peasant and promote his welfare. Therefore, if a peasant was unable to pay the whole amount due from him, he was not deprived of his land. Only pressure had to be exerted to induce him to pay. Some of the methods

of exerting pressure were unduly harsh. The defaulter was given a good beating, his property was confiscated and at times even his wife and children were sold away. But care was always taken to see that the peasant did not run away deserting his land because in such contingencies no other farmer would undertake to cultivate it and it usually remained fallow so that the Emperor got nothing as revenue. Akbar had issued definite instructions that the peasant should never be obliged to desert his land by undue coercion for payment. Instead, all arrears should be realized in easy seasonal instalments of 5%.

Akbar proposed to assess land revenue by measurement. He had, therefore, to devise a suitable machinery for enforcing it. Formerly, fields were measured by a hempen rope which was subject to contraction and expansion according to weather conditions. This caused much fluctuation in area and consequent dissatisfaction among the peasants. The Emperor, therefore, ordered the use of a *jarib* made of bamboo sticks secured with iron rings so that its length should remain constant.

He made a change in the yard-measure as well. The most popular measure in those days was the *Sikandari ghaz*, 42 digits long. But the yard-measure for cloth was the *Akbar-shahi ghaz*, measuring 46 digits. In order to restore uniformity of measure throughout the land, the Emperor introduced in 1586-87 an *Ilahi ghaz* which measured 41 digits only and superseded all others. The unit of area for fields was the *bigha* equal to 3600 sq.yds or 20 *biswas* each of which latter was equal to 20 *biswansis*.

Land revenue was formerly charged on the basis of the Hijri era 31 years of which were equal to only 30 of the solar. In was thus unfair to the agriculturists. The Emperor therefore introduced a new solar era called the *Ilahi* (Divine) from 10th March 1584. He further ordered that revenue should be realized seasonwise just after the harvests according to the solar year. The Emperor, says Abul Fazl, "did not carry out his design of suppressing" the Hijri era "because of the number of short-sighted, ignorant men who believed the currency of the era to be inseparable from religion."

Lest the burden of taxation might get too heavy, the Emperor classified land of the empire on the basis of its fertility and fixed rent in proportion to it. All arable land was classified into four categories: (1) *Polaj*, (2) *Parati*, (3) *Chachar* and

(4) *Banjar*

Land fit for cultivation and bearing a crop every year was called *Polaj*. This brought an annual revenue to the state.

Parati was the land which for one reason or the other had been left fallow for a year or two. The rule regarding this type of land was that it should pay a tax only when it was cultivated but at the rate of the *Polaj*.

The land that had been lying fallow for three or four years at a stretch rapidly deteriorated and even when it was reclaimed its yield for a number of years was much below the normal. Such a land was called *Chachar*. The rule for it was that it should be subjected to the full *Polaj* rate only after going through a sliding scale of revenue for 5 years. What Abul Fazl has written is not quite clear because he does not say anything about the fourth year of cultivation. According to the statement in the Ain it paid $\frac{2}{5}$ of the *Polaj* rate in the first year, $\frac{3}{5}$ the second year, $\frac{4}{5}$ in the third year and at full rate in the 5th year. This does not seem to represent the correct position. It would be more reasonable to assume that *Chachar* land paid in the first year only $\frac{1}{5}$ of the *Polaj* rate in the second $\frac{2}{5}$, in the third $\frac{3}{5}$ in the fourth $\frac{4}{5}$, in the fifth or subsequent years the full rate of the *Polaj* land.

The land which had not been cultivated for the last five years or more was called *Banjar*. A special rate was provided for reclaiming this land. In the first year only one or two seers of the produce was charged, in the second year, five seers, in the third year, $\frac{1}{6}$ of the produce, in the fourth year, $\frac{1}{4}$ and in subsequent years $\frac{1}{3}$. The aim of the state in granting these concessions was to prevent arable land lying fallow because in that case the state would get nothing out of them. A nominal rent in the beginning induced bolder spirits to undertake reclamation of uncultivated land which proved beneficial both to them and to the state.

All arrangements were made with *Polaj* as the standard. The normal rule was that one-third of the average produce should be realized as land tax. For the determination of the average produce of the *Polaj* land, it was divided into three classes good, bad and middling. The normal produce of one *bigha* of each of these categories (good, bad and middling) was totalled up and divided by three. The quotient was treated as the average produce of all categories of *Polaj* land. One-third of this average was fixed as the government due. Abul Fazl's account leaves the impression that it was no novel arrangement. Sher Shah had prepared his schedules on this basis and the Emperor adopted the schedules as he found them. In the schedules given in the Ain some of the rates were as under:—

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Crop grown	Annual Produce of good land	Annual Produce of Middling land	Annual Produce of bad land	Total of columns 2,3,4	Average produce	1/3 of average i.e. tax payable to state
	Mds. Srs.	Mds. Srs.	Mds. Srs.	Mds. Srs.	Mds. Srs.	Mds. Srs.
Whea	18—0	12—0	8—35	38—35	12—38 $\frac{1}{4}$	4—12 $\frac{3}{4}$
Barley	18—0	12—20	8—15	38—35	12—38 $\frac{1}{4}$	4—12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mustard	10—20	8—20	5—5	24—5	8—38 $\frac{3}{4}$	2—27 $\frac{1}{2}$
Cotton	10—0	7—20	5—0	22—20	7—20	2—20
Paddy	17—0	12—20	9—15	38—35	12—38 $\frac{1}{2}$	4—13
Jwar	13—0	10—20	7—20	31—0	10—13 $\frac{1}{2}$	3—18
Lubiya	10—20	7—20	5—10	23—10	7—30	2—20 $\frac{1}{2}$

In these schedules, revenue demand is shown in kind. But Akbar generally preferred payment in cash. To that end, market rates were ascertained each year at the time of harvesting and an approved rate-list was sent to the *amils* who converted the grain demand into cash according to the approved schedule of prices and realized the tax on that basis. If in certain areas, the peasant favoured payment in kind alone, they were permitted to do that. But there were many perishable crops like betels, fruits, vegetables, etc. whose revenue must always have been realized in cash.

Akbar's was a growing empire. As the extent of the empire increased a single schedule for the whole empire became more and more unfair. People were ever averse to making Earlier experiments payments. If the market rates in their area were lower, they naturally grumbled when asked to pay at a higher rate. Hence in 1565 the Emperor ordered that local officers should send market rates prevailing in their respective localities and on the same being approved by the centre should calculate the tax accordingly. The result was that in many localities the demand became lower and the peasant was satisfied. Thus during this period a single schedule was replaced by numerous local schedules.

Three years later, a permanent assessment demand was calculated on the basis of the figures of the past years. It appears that the government demand was fixed for the entire holding of a tenant. This could not satisfy everybody because it paid no heed to variation in yield, prices or the area actually cultivated. The tenant had to pay even for the land left fallow. Opposition by the tenants therefore led to its abandonment only two years later.

In 1570-1571 Muzaffar Khan and Todarmal introduced a fresh change. The *Qanungo* of each pargana was asked to collect statistics of average yield and current prices. A grain-demand was fixed on the basis of schedule of average produce and this was converted into cash on the basis of the schedule of prices which had to be approved by the centre year after year. This arrangement had three merits—(1) It was based on the local produce, (2) produce was calculated by striking an average of the produce of past years and (3) the grain-demand was converted into *dams* and rupees on the basis of the schedule of local prices.

But after remaining in force for about ten years, this too had to be modified as many practical difficulties came to light. The local rates had to be approved by the Emperor. If he was at the capital, this was quickly done and the local officers were able to make the collections in time. But he was often on tour. In such cases, it took much longer time to secure his approval. Sometimes, there arose a suspicion that the schedule of prices did not quote the correct figures. If an enquiry was instituted it further delayed approval.

This delay caused many complications. Sometimes, the prices went down in which case the peasant grumbled at the imposition of a higher rate. Sometimes it rendered all collection impossible because the peasant had in the meantime sold and spent all his surpluses. This led to needless coercion or accumulation of arrears and in either case it compromised the efficiency and integrity of the local official for no fault of his. These arrears caused inconvenience to the government also, and so it had to be given up.

What replaced it has come to be known as the *Dahsala* or the *Zabti* system. Abul Fazl's account of it is a little too cryptic and obscure in respect of relevant details. "From the beginning of the 15th year of the Divine era to the 24th, aggregate of the rates of collection was formed and a tenth of the total was fixed as the annual assessment; but from the 20th to the 24th year the collections were accurately determined and the five former ones accepted on the authority of persons of probity". Dr. Tripathi interprets it to mean that the last ten

Dahsala or the Zabti system

year's statistics were available both for the produce and the approved market rates. According to him, the grain demand was calculated by taking one-third of the average produce of the last ten years and it is then converted into cash demand on the basis of average of last ten year's prices. Sharma feels that the grain demand based on the schedule of Sher Shah was now converted into a fixed cash-demand on the basis of average price for the last ten years. Moreland suggests that the demand was fixed by averaging the last ten year's assessment rates.

Another change was simultaneously introduced. The schedules were now prepared *dastur-wise* in place of *pargana-wise* and a *dastur* generally included land of more or less of the same fecundity. Hence they could have comprised land formerly included in more than one *pargana*. And as the older assessment rates varied from *pargana* to *pargana* it was quite possible that a *dastur* might have included lands subject to more than one assessment rates during the past ten years. Thus in the case of the *dasturs* there had neither been a single or uniform market rate, nor had there been a single assessment rate, nor was there any record of their average produce as a unit. In such circumstances, it is difficult to say what was actually done.

If a meticulous regard for justice had been the inspiring motive it is probable that an average of the average prices prevailing in the *parganas* whose lands were included in a *dastur* should have been the basis for calculating its assessment rate in *dams* and *jitals*. As the yield of the *pargana* had no importance in the calculation of assessment-rates during the last ten years, it is quite probable that statistics of produce were not maintained. The provincial *Diwans* had not yet found their feet firmly implanted and that is perhaps the reason why assessment figures from 15th to 19th year were not available in official records. Preservation of statistical data about produce during this period of ten years therefore seems very improbable. But if the village *Patwaris* had been maintaining a record of the actual produce of every field in the village the calculation of average yield of the new *dasturs* for the last ten years would not only have been possible but also desirable. But there are two difficulties which militate against acceptance of this possibility as a fact: (1) the calculation of average produce would entail great labour and take time to finalise and (2) what was just and desirable was not necessarily done.

Whatever might have been the exact position, this is certain (1) that the change introduced in 1579-1580 was based on the last ten years' experience of Todarmul's schedules, (2) that the new schedules were prepared *dastur-wise* and (3) that

the assessment rate was permanently fixed which was not to be ordinarily affected by actuals of produce or market prices.

The *Dahsala* system proved beneficial to all parties. The peasant knew beforehand what he would have to pay for a particular crop. He could, therefore, himself calculate as soon as the sowings were over as to what he would have to pay at the time of collection. The work of the *Amils* and *Karkuns* also became easier. When the sowings were over, they toured the villages under their charge and as the records of the *patwari* specified the area of each field, their business was confined to mere noting against each field the crop sown. Having completed the survey of a whole village, they would calculate the demand fieldwise in respect of each peasant by reference to the assessment schedules. A copy of the details of demand from each village was forwarded to the provincial *Diwan* and each peasant was supplied demand slips. If there was any mistake in calculation it could easily be detected before payment and corrected. The government knew before hand what its receipts were likely to be and it could plan disbursements and new schemes accordingly. Under the new dispensation a much reduced collection staff could efficiently carry on the work. This meant a saving to the state.

From now on the *Dahsala* system became the standard official system. That is why it has also been called the *Zabti* (according to regulation) system. An attempt was later made to extend it to the whole empire. The reforms of Malik Ambar, Murshid Quli and Annaji Datto in the Deccan were also based on this.

This system was not so rigid that it should admit of no change whatsoever under any circumstances. Between 1585-1590 the crop in the Allahabad-Delhi region was so good that the prices became very low. Hence, during this period a temporary remission in revenue had to be granted to the tenants of this region. Similarly, the Emperor's continued stay at Lahore for a number of years affected the local prices which rapidly soared up. Hence the normal revenue was temporarily increased by 20% but the usual assessment rates were enforced again when the Emperor's departure in 1598 brought the prices down.

Akbar wanted to enforce this scheme everywhere. But it was not always possible. Hence as a realist he made exceptions in certain cases where local traditions were left undisturbed. The central region of the empire consisting of Lahore, Multan, Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, Awadh, Bihar and part of Ajmer was definitely

brought under it. In the hilly regions and in tracts dominated by local chiefs and Rajas, it could not be enforced. Provinces which had been conquered towards the end of the reign or which had conditions far different from northern India as for example Kashmir, Qandahar, Sindh and the Deccan were exempted from its application. In Gujerat, Ajmer, Bengal, Orissa and Malwa most of the tract was held by local *jagirdars* who had been granted full autonomy in respect of internal organisation. These areas, therefore, remained outside the *Dahsala* system. In Khandesh assessment was based on the village as a unit. This was left undisturbed for the time being.

There were four different agencies for collection of taxes from the peasants. Some land was called *Khalsa*. Here the work of revenue collection was entrusted to salaried officers of the government. The reforms enumerated above applied principally to this region. The second category consisted of *Jagirdars*. In regard to them Akbar introduced many changes. Under Babar, military commanders had been assigned even unconquered or semi-conquered regions. There they acted more or less like deputy sovereigns and the Emperor, usually, did not interfere in their internal administration. Under Humayun the conditions remained virtually the same. Sher Shah and Islam Shah tried to reduce the *jagirdari* system but after their death during the weak rule of their successors what little success they had secured was undone and *jagirs* became very common once again.

Under Akbar there was an attempt at enforcing an increasing control over the *jagirs* with a view to regulate their internal affairs according to the enlightened notions of the Emperor. In 1564 Etmad Khan was instructed to increase the scope of *Khalsa* land and to prevent all encroachments on it. Just then was started the practice of granting assignments (*jagirs*) in lieu of salary. Every assignee now had to maintain a proper account of the revenue of the *jagir*. When a *mansabdar* was granted *jagir* also for the maintenance of his troops he came under more rigorous control of the *Bakhshi* and had to surrender all surpluses to the state after deducting the salary of his contingent and himself.

But in the meantime, a serious defect had crept into this system. In the early years of the reign the extents of the empire fell far short of the demands for *jagirs* from different quarters. The officers of the Finance Department, therefore, hit upon the ingenuous device of arbitrarily inflating the revenue of *jagirs* so that they could now satisfy the demands of a much larger number than before. But when the assignees discovered the discrepancy between the nominal and the actual revenue of a *jagir* wrangles with the Finance Department started. Hence

Muzaffar Khan ordered fresh valuations to be prepared on the basis of records with *Qanungos*. This was enforced since 1566 and most of the discontent was allayed. But as the *Qanungos* had not been very careful in compiling their figures, discontent began to arise again by 1573. The Emperor now sought to put an end to all *jagirs* which were made *Khalsa* and were placed under the *Karoris* while the former assignees were paid in cash. In 1579-1580 fresh valuations were made on the basis of figures of the last ten years and once more assignments of land came in vogue. This change-over to the older practice was due to the failure of the *Karoris*, uncertainty of revenue and fondness for *jagirs* among the nobility.

Jagirdars were not the masters of the land placed under their charge. They were empowered only to use its usufruct in accordance with central regulations. They had to submit a detailed account of income and expenditure. When the *Zabti* system was introduced, it was applied to *jagirdari* land in provinces under the *Zabti* system as well.

Tributary chiefs and Rajas had far more extensive powers than even the *jagirdars*. According to the Timurid practice, the territories of vassal chiefs were regarded as part of the empire and were, therefore, designated as the *pargana* or the *sarkar*. These chiefs and Rajas held authority in their respective regions by rights of heredity. Hence the local people had a reverential attitude towards them. They constituted the remnants of former Hindu sovereignty. Their number and resources went on dwindling but they could never be eliminated. Akbar was particularly generous towards them and he preserved their distinctive rights and position. These chiefs and Rajas were free to demand from their subjects whatever taxes they thought fit. Hence in most of their regions old practices continued. But gradually the reforms introduced in contiguous provinces began to permeate them.

A lot of land had been granted away to freeholders for religious or cultural considerations. Such grantees often held these lands on a hereditary basis. These people often let out their land to peasants instead of cultivating it themselves. Such grants were called *Sayurghals*. Akbar discovered serious irregularities in their working. He therefore issued regulations for them. They were brought under the financial control of the Finance Department. All grantees receiving more than 250 *bighas* of land had to be presented before the Emperor. Those who did not turn up or who were found unsuitable were deprived of the grant and the land was made *Khalsa*. Still later, he established his own control over all grants, the office of the

Sadar-i-Jahan was for a time abolished and his work was carried on through provincial *Sadrs*. Badaoni has passed great strictures against royal interference in *Sayurghals*, but in most cases the interference proved beneficial and a lot of wastage was ended.

Each village had a *Patwari* who maintained a record of village lands. In Gujarat he was called *Talati* and in Maharashtra *Kulkarni*. His office was usually hereditary and he received only a commission in lieu of salary. Under Akbar he received 1% of the total collection from his village. He recorded in his papers the crop and the relative revenue demand for each field in the village. Assessment slips and receipts of payment were usually distributed through him. He had to forward to higher authorities a copy of the village statement authenticated by signature of the headman.

Another unsalaried officer of the village was the *Mukhiya* or the local headman. He was called *Muqaddam*, *Patel* or *Deshmukh*. He was the leader and the mouthpiece of the local population. He acted as the link between the peasant and the government and helped in collection of revenue. Sometimes *jagirdars* and *Amils* left revenue collection from the village entirely to him. In such cases, he became more important than otherwise. In Khandesh, this was the usual practice and the state for purposes of revenue dealt with the headman and not with the individual peasant. Here he was in charge both of collection and of distribution of the tax over the peasants.

In the *pargana* there was an important hereditary officer called the *Qanungo* who got no regular salary. He maintained a record of the produce and assessment of the whole *pargana* on the basis of the *Patwari's* papers. He was thus a repository of much valuable information. *Qanungos* were highly efficient and possessed detailed and authentic knowledge of local traditions and practices. Akbar made a rule of allowing them 1% of the total collection from a *pargana*. But later he discontinued this practice and brought them on the regular pay roll of the state. They were divided into three classes and were paid at the rate of Rs. 50/-, Rs. 30/- and Rs. 20/- p. m. respectively.

Among the salaried revenue collectors of the *pargana*, the *Amil* was the highest. He fixed the assessment and arranged supervision over the subordinate staff, sent a fortnightly report of income and expenditure to higher authorities and as soon as 2 lakh *dams* or more had been collected arranged for its transmission to the centre. These collections were probably sent to the *Amalguzar* of the sarkar who in his turn forwarded the treasure to the provincial *Diwan* who finally sent the provincial revenues to the centre. It was the duty of the *Amil*

to keep the peasants satisfied, to promote cultivation of crops and to advance loans for reclaiming fallow lands wherever necessary. He was advised to be always courteous in his dealings and was paid adequate salaries to keep him above want, speculation and corruption. His salary must have been higher than that of the *Qanungo*.

Below the *Amil* were *Karkuns* and *Girdawars* (circle inspectors) who maintained accounts, measured the land and toured the rural areas. They were paid some commission. Akbar had made definite rules in this regard whereby they received regular rations and 1 *dam* per *bigha* for measurement. He thus made it possible for them to lead a life of comfort and integrity. Each *pargana* had a treasurer who sometimes unnecessarily harassed the peasant. Hence clean cut instructions were issued not to refuse any coin and to charge compensation only when there was a deficiency in weight.

The happiness of the peasant depended on the good-will and integrity of these officers. The Emperor therefore took a number of measures to keep them happy and contented but under strict control. This was a special responsibility of the provincial *Diwan* and he sent monthly reports about their conduct. Secret informers also kept an eye on their activities.

One of the aims of framing these regulations by Akbar was to keep the peasantry satisfied. Local officers had been given detailed instructions for ameliorating the lot of the peasant. He stopped corruption, inculcated courtesy and advised a judicious use of discretion in enforcing payments. The standing instruction was that regular receipts must be issued for all payments and the peasant should be encouraged to make the payment directly in the state treasury. If a tenant did not like the *Zabli* system or payment in cash, local officers were allowed the discretion to treat with him differently. They were granted remissions in case of failure of crops and paid only a nominal sum on reclaimed fallow lands. They were encouraged to extend cultivation of superior crops to the mutual benefit of both the cultivator and the state. They were freed from the obligation to pay any *abwabs* and stringent orders were issued against realizing them. But these orders were disregarded in certain quarters. The taxes and perquisites that were abolished included among others the *Fizya*, the pilgrim tax, presents, allowances and commissions demanded by the collectors and the treasurers and the cess for census of cattle. The above account bears eloquent testimony to Akbar's concern for promoting peace, prosperity and contentment of the peasants. But the imperial servants did not prove as benevolent as the Emperor desired them to be. Hence he could not render the peasants as much service as was possible. Serious complaints were made against the *Karoris*, *Amils* and

Karkuns. Todarmal punished the defaulters with great severity and discharged hundreds of unworthy hands. But some irregularities persisted to the end despite all persuasion and punishment.

In the reign of Jahangir, the authority of the government grew lax and there was a general deterioration which particularly affected the land-revenue system. He tried to extend the *Zabti* system to Gujerat and Bengal but we have no details about the nature and extent of his success. Moreland is of opinion that slackness on the part of government led to suspension or serious modification of the *Zabti* system even where it had been in force and Group-assessment with village headmen or farmers of revenue became quite common. The power of the *jagirdars* increased and they imposed oppressive exactions on the peasant who in exasperation ultimately deserted his fields and fled away. This affected the imperial revenues so adversely that Jahangir had to fall on the reserves left behind by his father. Another serious evil that became quite common in his reign was the issuing of *Allamgha* grants to many people. These were hereditary grants near the place of birth and residence of the assignee. It were these grants which later hardened into *Zamin-daris*.

Adequate details about the land-revenue policy of Shah-jahan are not available. According to Dr. Saksena, the *Zabti* system did not prosper under him either, for 70% of the land was given away in *jagir*. There was no direct contact between the state and the peasant and group-assessment initiated under Jahangir became almost universal under him. There are numerous anecdotes suggestive of Shahjahan's concern for the welfare of his subjects. But whatever he did in regard to land revenue policy proved only detrimental to them. Under him the assessment rate was carried from 33% to the neighbourhood of 50%. The only element of his policy which proved beneficial to the people was the laying out of canals. Another change introduced by Shahjahan was that the peasant had to pay for his entire holding irrespective of his cultivating the whole of it or not. The result was that the economic condition of the people became miserable and they suffered heavily from famines of this period.

The *farmans* of Aurangzeb now extant suggest that he had ordered the assessment to range between $\frac{1}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{2}$ of the produce. During his reign farming of revenue and assignments continued and there was no improvement in the lot of the peasant. Moreland feels that because of the financial difficulties of this reign, $\frac{1}{2}$ should have been the normal assessment-rate during this

Changes under
Jahangir

Changes under
Shahjahan

Aurangzeb's
policy

period. Farming was generally preferred because it substantially reduced the cost of collection. The Emperor was little concerned about what they did to the peasant. Thus under Aurangzeb the welfare of the peasant continued to be neglected just as under Jahangir and Shahjahan so that the privileges enjoyed by him under Akbar became a matter of history. That is why the reign of Akbar is still remembered with respect and gratitude.

Aurangzeb's *farmans* to Muhammad Hashim, the *Diwan* of Gujerat and Rasikadas *Karori* throw a flood of light on his land revenue policy. They reveal the oppressions resorted to by Government officials and the consequent miseries of the peasant. These *farmans* recognized as before the right of the peasant to ownership of his holding and they were conceded the right of transferring it by sale, mortgage or lease to others. The Emperor was interested in enhancing the revenue from land but he admitted that this could only be possible if the peasant was satisfied and he could devote himself to his calling with enthusiasm. But he was interested not merely in the welfare of the subjects but satisfaction of the peasant which was a means to improving the revenue of the state. Therefore if generosity to the tenant was likely to affect the revenues of the state, he recommended adoption of harsher methods. If a farmer usually cultivated his entire holding and it was because of some unavoidable reason that some land had been left unutilized or if there had been a failure of crop despite the sowing on account of natural calamities, a remission in revenue was to be granted. But if there was the least suspicion that he was in a position to cultivate all his fields but had failed to make use of some of them out of sheer negligence, he was asked to pay for the unused field as well. Those who deserted the fields were persuaded to return but if persuasion failed, they were subjected to beating and on their return their fields were restored to them. Oppression by local officers assumed different forms like demand for perquisites, arbitrary enhancement of revenue, realization of illegal cesses and grant of remissions only in consideration for illegal gratification. Sometimes they even demanded the tax before the harvesting time. The Emperor forbade all these illegal practices.

Some officials were found guilty of a number of immoral practices. They embezzled government funds by falsely showing some fields as fallow or as cases of failure of crops or showing as arrears what had actually been collected and persisted in realizing illegal cesses. In such cases the Emperor ordered a strict enquiry into their conduct and recommended dismissal of all those who were incorrigible.

The *farmans* also suggest that although the normal rate of assessment was $1/2$ it was sometimes reduced to $1/3$ or $2/5$. In some places more than $1/2$ was also realized because the Emperor repeatedly remarks that even if the peasant was capable of paying more than $1/2$, that maximum limit should not be exceeded. There is also a reference to iniquitous distribution of revenue by *Chaudhris*, *Mugaddams*, *Patwaris* and *Qanungos*. This suggests that the system of farming had become very common and direct contact between the peasant and the sovereign had practically ceased. These *farmans* clearly show that the lot of the peasant was much worse than under Akbar and he had to pay a much heavier tax. The *patwaris*, *mugaddams*, *Qanungos* and *Chaudhris* in alliance with the local officers subjected them to rack-renting and deprived them of more than $1/2$ of their produce. Control by higher officers was lax and they took the side of the local officers as partners in their illegal gratification. Imperial orders in favour of the peasant were evaded while those against him were rigorously enforced. If the peasant failed to cultivate a field, he was charged with wilful neglect and was subjected to payment of the whole amount. If he complained of failure of crop, his version was disbelieved as a lie and he was allowed little or no remission. When loans were granted to him, middlemen retained a part for themselves and devised ingenious methods for realizing money from him. If he got sick of life and fled in despair, he was pursued, captured and severely belaboured to induce him to return to his fields. The lot of the peasants, therefore, was miserable indeed. In the beginning, the Emperor sought to alleviate their sufferings but when his financial difficulties increased he too was interested more in receiving the maximum amount possible from the local officers than for keeping them on the path of duty and justice. These conditions became still worse in the 18th century.

The Timurid empire over the Deccan was established much later and the struggle for supremacy was a longdrawn out one causing great sufferings to the people of the Deccan. Malik Amber, described as the Todarmal of the south and a contemporary of Jahangir was the first to try to improve the lot of the peasant in the Deccan. Just as the *Dahsala* system of Todarmal became the ideal for the north, so Amber's measures become the ideal for the south.

His system was based on the principles of *Tankha* - i. e. cash payment and *Raqba* i. e. area (of the field). Like Todarmal, he ordered a general survey and measurement of all arable land though the standard of measure was not everywhere the same. The land was next classified on the basis of its fertility. The average produce of each category of land was fixed by a rough estimate and the government share was determined on

its basis. He wanted all the peasants to pay the land revenue in cash but he did not want to resort to coercion. So he granted concession to those who elected in favour of either system of payment. The usual assessment rate was $\frac{2}{5}$ of the produce but it was reduced to $\frac{1}{3}$ in case of those paying in cash. The cash demand was made permanent. In determining this cash valuation of the field, due regard was paid both to its yield and the current prices in the locality. Thus in this respect too, he followed in the footsteps of Todarmal. But he did not have as much leisure as his predecessor, hence his system was not as strong. Even then, fixation of assessment on a permanent basis proved very beneficial to all.

Malik Ambar also took a number of other measures to keep the peasants happy and contented because he realized that that was necessary for the success of any scheme of land reform. The peasant was recognized as the proprietor of his holding and he was provided with all facilities to make his holding as profitable as possible. If the produce of his land increased, the government did not demand any extra payment but if his yield declined, it came to his rescue by granting proportionate remissions.

The worst enemy of the peasant was the local government official. Hence Malik Ambar directed his attention to this problem as well. He cashiered all hereditary *Patels* and *Deshmukhs* and replaced them by Brahmins noted for their integrity and moral character and came to an agreement with them as the new headmen of his village economy. They were supplied with details regarding the names of the cultivators, the area of their holdings and the cash-demand fixed on them, and were asked to enter into an agreement with the state to realize the taxes on the basis of the cash-schedule supplied to them and to deposit the same in the state treasuries. They were entrusted with the task of collection and as the representatives of the village they contracted to pay the total dues to the state. In return for this, they were granted hereditary rights of headmanship and a part of the village land on condition that they would cultivate it through a local peasant on the basis of division of crops between them. They were also entrusted with the care of the village common and charged with the responsibility to ensure its equitable use by all in the village. This system proved very successful and improved the finances of Ahmadnagar within a short time.

The next important man to take up the question of land reform in the Deccan was Murshid Quli Khan, the *Diwan* of Aurangzeb during his second viceroyalty of the Deccan (1653-1657). Shahjahan had specially charged the new viceroy to promote agriculture and improve the finances of the Deccan *subas*. It

Reforms of
Murshid Quli

was in compliance with this order that Murshid Quli underook to reform conditions in the Deccan *subas*. He based his plans on the Islamic theory and the practice under Todarmal and Malik Ambar and devised and enforced his measures within a very short time. He wialed to enforce the *Zabti* system throughout the area but the peasants did not approve of it and wanted to stick to their old practices. He therefore fixed his plans with due regard to the sentiments of the peasants, and approved three different systems. In some areas, assessment was based on the number of ploughs without any reference to the size of the holding or their yield.

The second was the system of *batai* (division of crops). He first fixed a priori of what he expected as government revenue from the whole area and on that basis fixed the rate of assessment. Lands irrigated by rain water alone did not yield much. Hence from them the usual $1/2$ was realized. Lands irrigated by wells had a better yield but considering the labour and expense incurred in irrigation he demanded from each land only $1/3$ of the produce. Sugarcane and opium poppy fetched a high price. Hence in their case assessment was fixed at a much lower rate, the lowest being $1/9$ of the produce.

The third was the system of measurement and cash payment. In this area, he took $1/4$ of the produce as the ideal demand and fixed the cash demand on that basis. Thus he too induced voluntary acceptance of the system of measurement by keeping the cash assessment at a lower rate. Like Malik Ambar, he too settled the peasants in deserted regions, granted them habilitation loans and guaranteed them protection against oppression. Assured of full co-operation by Aurangzeb, he succeeded in keeping the local officers under strict control and protected the peasant from oppression. This improved the condition of the Deccan provinces and Murshid Quli's name was long remembered with gratitude in those regions.

The next novel experiment after Murshid Quli was made under Shivaji. Shivaji treated Malik Ambar's system as the ideal but he made modification wherever necessary. He too did not insist on a common pattern everywhere. In some areas, specially the less productive regions, he based the assessment on the plough. Those who reclaimed fallow or barren lands paid nothing in the beginning and the revenue in subsequent years was raised by slow stages. In other regions he favoured measurement in terms of *bighas*. His *jarib* measured 5 cubits 5 fists and was called *Kathi*. One *bigha* was equal to 20 *Kathi* by 20 *Kathi* or approximately about 3600 sq. yds.

Shivaji was in a hurry to finish this job. He therefore appointed separate officers for different regions. Annaji Datto

was entrusted with the settlement in the Konkan. He ordered the *Kulkarnis* to undertake survey and measurement of land in the village in consultation with the local peasants and to prepare a statement showing names of peasants, size of their holdings and the estimated yield per *bigha*. When they had finished their work, he had a sample checkup in selected villages in each region. If his figures tallied with those prepared by the local people he approved the latter's statement as valid and authentic and made a permanent settlement on that basis. In case of difference, a compromise settlement was made in consultation with the peasants. Having finished the survey work, he recommended assessment at the rate of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the produce. But Shivaji fixed it at $\frac{2}{5}$ assuring at the same time to abolish all local cesses and imposts. On this basis, schedules were prepared for different crops for each village and taxes were realized according to these assessment schedules. But as this work was initiated in or near about 1678, full benefits of it could only have been reaped under Shambhuji.

Shivaji also made provision for settling peasants in uninhabited regions by granting them loans and assuring them a just and liberal treatment and at the same time took adequate steps to keep the local officers under proper control. According to Ranade the whole *Swarajya* was divided for purposes of revenue into 12 provinces and the governors were specially instructed to keep the peasants happy and contented. He abolished a number of cesses as well. But in this respect he did not meet with any better luck than the Emperor of Delhi with the result that despite his orders to the contrary, local cesses continued to be realized in certain areas. But they were not very oppressive and some of them related only to classes rather than masses. Thus the *Telpati* (or the oil cess) must have been realized only from the oilpressers in the kingdom. Others were apparently realized only once a year or once in many years.

Before the time of Shivaji collection of taxes was entrusted to *Patels* and *Kulkarnis* in the villages and to *Deshmukhs* and *Deshpandes* in the *Tarafs*. But he deprived them of these privileges and the work was entrusted to others. The collection of revenue from the village was entrusted to *Havaldars* who received 3 to 5 *huns* a year. Over the *Havaldars* of the village there was a *Havaldar* of a *Taraf* (i.e. district). The latter was assisted by a *Karkun*. Above them were placed the provincial governors. *Amatya* and the *Sachiva* called for reports from local officers and supervised their work. Here too, as in other spheres, Shivaji took good care to prevent any office becoming hereditary. Nor was any officer permitted to disregard central regulations.

The other sources of Shivaji's income were mints, presents, customs, passports *etc.* But the best paymasters of the Marathas

were their enemies. For eight months during the year, some enemy region or the other had to bear the cost of maintaining his troops. Besides, he subjected it to a levy for the royal treasury as well. This latter was called *Chauth* or *Sardeshmukhi*.

Shivaji claimed to be the hereditary *Sardeshmukh* of Maharashtra, and as such, claimed 10% of its revenues. In former practice the *Sardeshmukhs* assisted in collection of revenue and received a commission of 10% for their services. Shivaji contended that the Muslim usurpers had deprived him of this hereditary privilege. If they paid him 10% of the revenue, he would keep quiet. Otherwise, he would forcibly realize his dues. No self-respecting ruler could submit to this impudent demand. Shivaji therefore plundered enemy territory wherever possible. The Emperor ordered strong measures against him but when local officers failed to defeat him they often agreed to pay *Sardeshmukhi*.

But even this brought them no relief. When the right of levying *Sardeshmukhi* had been conceded, he made a demand for *Chauth*. His argument was that although the land in question formed a part of his *Sardeshmukhi*, opposition by Muslims had forced him to keep an army for realising it and protecting his rights. The responsibility for imposing this needless expense on him rested on the enemy who must therefore make good his loss by paying 1/4 of the total revenue which he called *Chauth*. Those who were weaker were pressed to pay on a different basis. He cajoled and threatened to seize their entire possessions but was willing to let them enjoy their privileges provided they paid him 1/4 of their revenues. This too was called *Chauth*. Both these levies were realized by a demonstration of superior military might and the only advantage accruing to those who paid it was that Shivaji abstained from plundering their subjects. Many historians have therefore questioned the justice and moral propriety of these demands. But the Maratha historians have adduced various arguments in defence of Shivaji. Ranade has likened it to the subsidiary alliance of Lord Wellesley and has sought to justify it on that basis. Sardesai says that Shivaji adopted these methods because he had no alternative. He was engaged in a war of liberation for which he needed funds. He demanded payment from cities and plundered them only when they refused to pay. Hence military necessity transcended moral considerations. It is true that Shivaji had made *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* as a means of extending his sphere of influence and in an age in which empire-building was considered a laudable pursuit, the acts of Shivaji cannot be found exceptionable by dispassionate observers. On the contrary, they might admire his resourcefulness. But judged from normal standards all wars are symbols of barbarism and empires built by

wars are examples of murder and dacoity on a tremendously large scale. The acts of Shivaji too should therefore be judged in this light.

Under the Peshwas a number of measures and methods were adopted to improve agriculture in the areas controlled by them. Some of them were:

- (i) Loans were advanced for improvement of agriculture and they were realized in easy instalments so that the peasant may not suffer inconvenience.
- (ii) In relation to reclamation of fallow and barren lands, the practice of Shivaji to realize no tax in the beginning was followed.
- (iii) The peasants were deprived of the right of sale and mortgage of their holdings.
- (iv) The assessment rates were kept low and the peasant was allowed the option to pay in cash or kind.
- (v) In case of damage to crops, remissions were granted.

But during this period a number of new problems crept in. The zamindari system rapidly increased and the Zamindars became the arbiters of the destiny of their tenants and the officers of the village and the *Taraf* tended to become hereditary. Thus the defects which Shivaji had tried to eradicate were ushered in by the *Peshwas*.

The foregoing account reveals the fact that one of the most serious problems of the medieval monarchs was the problem of land settlement. Akbar paid due attention to this and with the assistance of a number of able persons among whom the most distinguished was Todarmal was able to devise a satisfactory system of assessment. His system continued to inspire later generations and whenever regard was paid to it, the income of the state increased and the peasantry became more contented and happy.

CHAPTER XXIV

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

In Hindu and Muslim society, the ruler had no unfettered right of legislation at will. They both attached great importance to principles of their faiths and their holy books were accepted as the guide in social relations and political organisation. Consequently, none of these two societies recognised the supremacy of law framed by an individual or an assembly of individuals.

Law

But as time passed and social problems became more intricate and complex, it became difficult to run the government merely on the basis of books compiled or revealed in the hoary past. Consequently, with lapse of time certain rules, practices and traditions became inseparable adjuncts to original principles presented by religion.

In the history of Islam, law has been divided into Islamic Law *Sharai* and *Urfi*. We will now discuss these.

(1) *Sharai Law*—The real sovereign of the universe is Allah. His commands thus constitute universal law. These commands were revealed to men through God's prophets, the last among whom was Muhammad, the founder of historical Islam. Matters which are regarded as an essential element of religion e.g. marriage, succession, inheritance etc. fall under the *Sharai* law. The principal component elements of the *Sharai* law are the *Quran*, *Hadis*, *Ijma*, and *Qayas*. The *Quran* is a religious book which does not enunciate principles of law in very exact and precise terms. But as Muslims believe it to be the word of God, it is only natural that it should command the highest reverence among them. The *Quran* was revealed to man through the instrumentality of Muhammad. He therefore commands special importance in the eyes of mankind. But the Muslims regard him as *Insan-i-Kamil* or the perfect man. Therefore, what he said, did, or did not oppose acquired a special sanctity. A collection of all this is called the *Sunna* or *Hadis*. It was later discovered that the *Quran* and the *Hadis* did not always provide a clear injunction in regard to matters that confronted Muslim society in course of its later development. In such cases, the most eminent theologians of Islam were consulted and their concurrence or *Ijma* was accepted as the right solution. Analogous inferences based on the *Quran*, the *Hadis* and the *Ijma* were called *Qayas*. These supplemented the Islamic law. Still later came the commentators on Muslim

Law who based their interpretations on an exhaustive study of the *Quran*, the *Hadis*, the *Ijma* and the *Qayas*. These have since acquired their own importance in the Muslim world.

(2) *Urfi Law*—Rulers of different Muslim states have from time to time issued rules and regulations, based on justice and fair play, bearing on matters like trade, property, war, taxation, etc. These are collectively known as the *Urfi* law. In interpreting and applying the *Urfi* law a judge was allowed considerable discretion. But in respect of Sharai law, he had no such freedom and had to abide strictly by the views of approved jurists.

Judges in medieval India had to pronounce judgment on four types of cases for each of which a separate provision was made. Thus there were four types of courts in

medieval India :

- (i) *Canon Law courts* which had jurisdiction over purely religious matters
- (ii) Revenue courts
- (iii) Civil courts and
- (iv) Criminal courts. Courts of these various categories were organised on a territorial basis in a graded system.

Canon law cases could be heard only by the *Qazis* and the court of first instance in such cases was usually the *Qazi-i-sarkar*. The local *Muhtasib* brought these cases to his notice. A bench was usually formed by associating the the *Sadr* with the *Qazi* to hear all such cases.

If the decision of this court did not satisfy any of the parties it could go in appeal to the court of the provincial *Qazi* who too associated the local *Sadr* with himself while trying such cases. The highest court of appeal was the court of the *Qazi-ul-Quzat* at the centre. Here too the *Sadr* was associated to form a bench to hear them. The provincial and the central courts had both original and appellate jurisdiction.

An important change in this respect was the loss of prestige and power formerly enjoyed by the *Sadr*. Akbar had got so disgusted with complaints against the *Sadr-i-Jahan* that he drastically cut down his powers. It was in pursuance of this policy that he was now deprived of his judicial powers which were entrusted with the *Qazi-ul-Quzat*.

The lowest revenue court in the Mughal empire was the court of the *Amil* of the pargana. The next higher court was that of the *Amalguzar* in the sarkar. The provincial and central revenue courts were presided over by the provincial and the central *Diwan* respectively. Adjudication was not the prime duty of these officers. In those days there was no watertight separation of the executive and the judiciary. That is why these

executive officers engaged in the Department of Finance and Revenue were assigned judicial functions relative to their official duties. Their special knowledge of revenue affairs was the sole criterion for their appointment as judges in revenue cases.

The village *panchayats* had criminal jurisdiction in petty cases. They were thus the lowest trial court for criminal cases and usually there were no appeals against their findings. Under Sher Shah, the *Shiqdar* of the pargana tried all cases of dacoity, murder, breach of peace *etc.* But petty criminal cases relating to theft or rioting in the pargana town were assigned to the local *Kotwal*. Later on, a whole-time *Qazi* was appointed who tried most of the criminal cases within the pargana.

Appeals from the courts in the pargana lay with the *Qazi* of the Sarkar who formed the highest criminal court in the region and possessed both original and appellate jurisdiction. Besides him, the local *Faujdar* and *Kotwal* also had some criminal jurisdiction. The court of the *Faujdar* was particularly called the *Faujdari Adalat*. His powers were analogous to those of modern magistrates.

Above the Sarkar courts were the two appellate courts in the province. Appeals against the decisions of the *Faujdar* were heard by the Governor's court while appeal against the decisions of the *Qazi-i-sarkar* were heard by the provincial *Qazi*. Both these courts had original jurisdiction as well.

The highest courts on the criminal side too were located at the imperial headquarters. One day in a week, the Emperor also tried cases. He was assisted by the *Qazi* of the capital, *Qazi-ul-Quzat*, the *Mufti* of the empire and a select group of theologians specially chosen for the purpose. This was the highest court of the empire. Ordinarily, appeals from provincial courts were heard by the *Qazi-ul-Quzat* and no appeal in the usual course could be carried before the Emperor. But a citizen had a right to address petitions to him and the Emperor in his discretion could look into any such case and give necessary directions.

There were no separate officers appointed for hearing civil cases at different levels. The *Qazis* of the pargana, sarkar, province and the capital tried civil cases. Their appellate powers were similar in principle.

Preservation of peace and order was supposed to be the principal aim of justice. Disorder or lawlessness resulted from offences against (i) God, (ii) state or (iii) individual citizens. In the first two cases punishment was usually deterrent and

exemplary so that it may have a deterrent effect by the severity of its example on the actual and potential offenders. But in the last case, the question of punishment arose only when the aggrieved party carried a plaint to the proper law-court and the accused failed to compound with him by payment of money or by any other method whatsoever. All criminal offences including even murder could be settled by compounding.

Secondly, no regular record of cases seems to have been maintained by the trial courts because at the time of appeal the formal written judgment of the lower court was not necessarily filed. Appeal generally meant retrial of a case *de novo*. Because of difficulties of travel in those days, appeals to provincial or central courts must have been few and far between.

There were no formal codes for the guidance of judges. Those that existed had been compiled by foreign jurists in foreign lands to suit foreign conditions on the basis of traditions developed there. The *Mustis*, *Qazis* and the *Vakils* depended on these law-books. Under Aurangzeb a comprehensive law-book, called the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* was compiled by the joint labours of a galaxy of eminent jurists at a cost of two lakhs of rupees to the state. But there is no reference in it to decisions by former Indian judges.

Criminal cases were tried according to the Islamic law but revenue cases were tried according to local traditions, while civil and canon law of the Hindus were heard by learned Brahmins appointed for the purpose.

In administration of justice, there was no equality before law and sometimes decisions were most iniquitous. The rich often escaped punishment while the poor were generally treated with great effrontery by the lower *Qazis*.

Lawyers could be employed by litigants and some of the most noted lawyers of his period were Ramachandra and Ray Arzani among the Hindus and Qawamuddin and Muhmmad Mohsin among the Muslims. One lawyer bore the title of Vakalat Khan. Some rulers had appointed lawyers for defending pauper suits. Government advocates were also appointed for defending cases against the state.

All important rulers of this period kept before themselves the ideal of making due provision for justice. They themselves were willing to hear petitions from all and sundry, irrespective of rank, class or birth. Love of justice among Indian rulers Jahangir had hung a chain of justice to which any supplicant could attach his petition. As he pulled the chain a bell was sounded and the petition was promptly pulled up and provision made for its satisfactory disposal. Once it is said that the bell was sounded during the night and on enquiry

it was discovered that there was no man but only an ass. The benevolent paragon of justice soon summoned its owner and ordered him to provide proper fodder to it on pain of punishment. Thus the Emperor redressed the wrong of even an ass. Aurangzeb and Shahjahan had set apart Wednesday for justice alone. Aurangzeb had made a rule that every week 10 petitioners of humble origin should be presented before him for redress of their grievances. Suits of other plaintiffs were referred to other appropriate courts. Both Akbar and Aurangzeb took special care to keep the judiciary honest, efficient, just and industrious. Akbar permitted suits to be brought even against himself. The Emperors of this period did not permit the judges to impose the penalty of death on any person without their concurrence.

Aurangzeb introduced the most comprehensive reforms in administration of justice. He was a man of a religious bent of mind and wanted that government should be carried on in strict conformity to Law. Ever since the days of the Caliphs, the moral responsibility of the sovereign to ensure justice had been emphasised and Aurangzeb wanted to leave behind a name as an ideal Muslim sovereign.

Reforms of
Aurangzeb

After Firuz Tughluq no Muslim monarch of India had sought to issue any legal code. Islam Shah had issued certain regulations for administrative convenience and a copy of these was supplied to all principal officers in the realm. But we have no definite information about their subject-matter. The reforms made by Akbar have been compiled in the *Ain* but that too was not intended to serve as a compendium of law for the guidance of judges. It was Aurangzeb alone who issued the famous *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* which proved of great help to the judicial officers of the realm.

He himself had read widely and deeply and took a special delight in the study of law. On the basis of his study and analysis he drafted a number of instructions for the guidance of judges and insisted on their compliance with it.

He made it a rule that no one was to be detained in jail except on the authority of a *Qazi*. He had further directed that no warrant of arrest should be issued unless there was a *prima facie* case against the person in question. After arrest he should be produced before a law-court within the shortest possible time and his case quickly decided. Indefinite detentions without trial or conviction were frowned upon and prohibited. He also framed regulations regarding release of persons on bail.

For assistance in proper administration of justice *Vakils* were employed by the state and they were instructed to offer free legal advice to those who could not afford to engage any

counsel on their account. He sought to regulate the procedure of appeals and issued a directive that people should not rush to him for relief when other courses were open. They should in the first instance approach the local *Qazi*. He also tried to impose certain restrictions on the unlimited right of appeal. He himself tried cases according to law and pronounced judgments after proper consultation with expert jurists. He did not want to devote too much time to this but desired that his methods and example should be emulated by other *Qazis*.

But the benevolence of the Emperor did not always redound to the welfare of his subjects. The instrument of instructions issued to a *Qazi* at the time of his appointment under Aurangzeb generally included the following exhortation:

Lapses of *Qazis*

"Be just, be honest, be impartial. Hold the trials in the presence of the parties and at the court house and the seat of Government. Do not accept presents from the people of the place where you serve, nor attend entertainments given by anybody and everybody . . . know poverty to be your glory."

But few *Qazis* did rise to such high expectations though most of them were greedy and avaricious and not only did they not refuse presents from the local people but even gave palpably wrong judgments in consideration for money. There were many who did not bother about the provisions of law and delivered judgments according to their whims. There were some who never attended court and tried cases at their own residence. Some held court only twice or thrice a week. Aurangzeb warned and exhorted them in the clearest possible terms not to absent themselves from duty except on Friday, the Muslim Sabbath. Some *Qazis* were great ignoramuses and their knowledge of law was very perfunctory. These last could have taken assistance from the local *Mufti* but they did not care to do even that.

The medieval judicial system had a number of other defects as well. Reference has already been made to the paucity of suitable law-books. Legal procedure was not quite rational and the relation between different courts was not satisfactorily defined. The law of evidence left much to be desired. Punishments were generally severe and Aurangzeb is said to have given a general licence to everybody to kill a thief caught red-handed. This was neither fair nor in conformity to the Holy Law. The judges were generally recruited from among the theologians who were as a rule bigoted and narrow-minded. There was no efficient machinery for apprehending criminals. The Police often acted in collusion with bad characters and the secret informers did not always report accurately because the Emperor himself had

instructed them to send true reports but not in a manner as might cause offence to local nobility. In such circumstances, complaints against the nobles could hardly be made. If a complaint was ever made, they were powerful enough to prevent justice being done against them. Officers of the judicial department were comparatively low paid. It was therefore not unnatural that they should stoop to corruption. Palsaert writing about conditions under Jahangir says that bribery was an approved institution and nobody considered it immoral or improper because the Emperor himself does not consider any petition unless it is supported by presents. Similar conditions must have prevailed under other monarchs too.

The royal prisons for housing undertrials and convicts were not quite satisfactory. Some forts were used as jails. Expense

Jails on jails was perhaps resented by all rulers. They therefore did not favour imprisonment for long periods. They preferred instead fines, confiscation of property, mutilation of body or death. Executions were generally held on Tuesdays and the Emperor was usually present. Torture to extort confessions was commonly resorted to and sometimes a person succumbed to these tortures. In the reign of Aurangzeb detention was also an approved method for securing confessions. Usually no convict had to serve the full term of his sentence in jail. Detention in jail usually lasted till the convict became weak and submissive, or agreed to atone for his crime or to embrace Islam if he happened to be a non-Muslim. Many persons secured freedom by bribing the jailors and were seldom re-arrested. The internal organisation of jails was highly unsatisfactory and in state prisons like the one at Gwalior important political prisoners were subjected to slow-poisoning which induced insanity followed by death. When Sulaiman Shikoh was brought before Aurangzeb, he burst into tears at the prospect of death by slow poisoning and prayed to his uncle that if that were to be his fate he might be shown the mercy of an immediate execution. The Emperor assured him that he would be treated well but the poor man died in the manner he had apprehended. Little or no care was taken of hygiene and cleanliness in jails nor was there any satisfactory arrangement for messing and treatment.

A few examples of common punishments were for instance, male members of the royal family were usually blinded after a war of succession and later put to death if thought necessary. Formerly, the method of blinding was to cut out the eyes of the unfortunate man, but as time passed punishments became a little less barbarous, and a more humane method of blinding was devised. A red hot sharp needle was pierced through the pupil and the man thus lost sight without suffering any disfigure-

Punishments

ment of the face. In some cases, persons were sewn in hides of oxen or asses and paraded through the city in that hideous form. Such punishments were in vogue even upto the time of Akbar. But flaying alive and stuffing the skin with straw—a favourite pastime of Muhammad bin Tughluq—practically ceased. Salim is said to have flayed a person alive but this had greatly shocked Akbar. Whipping was often resorted to. Nobody was given hundreds of strokes at one stretch. They were distributed over a shorter or longer period according to the estimated capacity of one's endurance. If it appeared that a man might die of his sufferings, he was put into prison and allowed to recover from his wounds so that the rest of the sentence might be carried out after recovery. Sometimes a man was hacked to pieces bit by bit and special care was taken to begin with such limbs as would not lead to his death. Shambhuji and Banda Bahadur were subjected to this horrible treatment. Death by trampling under the feet of elephants or being torn to pieces by wild animals was also familiar. Jahangir had a special fancy for this variety of execution. Sometimes the Emperor imposed death penalty by secret poisoning with out reference to any lawcourt or open conviction on any specified charge. Jay Singh and Jaswant Singh are suspected to have been poisoned to death by Aurangzeb's malice. Sometimes a man was assassinated by professional murderers. Khan-i-Jahan Lodi fled from the court of Shahjahan only because of such a suspicion. In the reign of Akbar, the hostile *ulema* was killed by drowning although a pretence was kept up of accidental drowning. For the punishment of some, ingenuous devices were used. Shaikh Abd-un-nabi, Chief *Sadr* under Akbar was very avaricious. He was sent to Mecca, supplied with money for charity on behalf of the Emperor. On his return, he was asked to furnish accounts. As anticipated, he had pocketed most of the money himself. He was therefore put into prison from where he was never released till death came to his rescue. Autocratic despotism unsupported by public opinion was ever severe in its punishments in all lands and times. The same applied to India as well.

CHAPTER XXV

RELIGIOUS POLICY

The religious policy of a state depends on contemporary conditions, past traditions and religious beliefs of its people on the one hand and individual predilection of the rulers on the other. In monarchical governments, nothing plays a more important part than the religious beliefs and political ideals of the monarch, while in democratic governments, rulers have to respect the wishes of the people and to adjust their views to the exigencies of the hour. There are some rulers who in their vanity and unbridled pride try to ride roughshod against the wishes and cherished ideals of the people regardless of consequences. But those who are more generous and enlightened try to harmonise their thoughts with the aspirations of the people. This however goes without saying that popular beliefs and traditions always exercise some influence on the religious policy of the state, no matter in what proportion.

Hence for a satisfactory delineation of the religious policy of the Mughals it is necessary to take into account these basic factors and influences. It is in this background that their policy can be better appreciated.

The Indian people have been accustomed to subordinating the temporal to the spiritual. Thoughtful Indians have always held the view that man was created not by accident but by a Supreme Intelligence. They have therefore tried to unravel the mystery of creation and human destiny in the divine dispensation. They have accorded an extremely important place to the *Vedas* in their spiritual development and a vast majority of Indian thinkers have regarded the *Vedas* as the fountain of deep spiritual thought. But they have never desired to canalise all thought into a single pattern and to force everybody to conform to it. They recognized the value of a distinct personality of each individual and despite differences of caste and family in the social sphere have conceded to all complete spiritual freedom to seek fulfilment of one's personality according to his capacity and lights. They regarded the individual as the epitome of the universal and hence they have sought truth and reality within and not without themselves. The result was that philosophy, religion, ritual and forms of devotion had a free growth and the rulers abstained from interfering in the reli-

Religious condition of India at the beginning of the 16th century

gious and spiritual life of the people confining their attention merely to maintaining social decorum and orderliness.

But after the coming of the Muslims and the establishment of Turkish dominion in India they had a painful experience of an utterly different mentality. That did not induce in them a respect for Islam or lack of faith in the truth of their own religion. Among the Muslims there were some narrow minded begots who regarded the Hindus as base and contemptible. But there were others who made no distinction between the God of the Hindu and the Muslim and regarded them both as the children of a common Father in Heaven and treated them with affection and good-will. Many factors conspired to bring about a reapproachment between the two communities and people of both the communities gradually came closer and closer to each other. Kabir tried to establish perfect harmony between the two communities by stressing the essential unity of Hinduism and Islam. He preached that the ultimate reality was one and indivisible but that ignorant people quarrelled about names and outer trappings. He says :

दुइ जगदीस कहाँ ते आये, कहु कौने भरमाया ।
अल्ला राम, करीमा-केसो, हरि हजरत नाम धराया ॥

“O friend who has deluded you in the belief that there are two Lords of the universe? There is only a difference in name. Allah or Rama, Karim or Keshava, Hari or Hazrat (*i. e.* Lord) are only different names of the same Divinity”.

Nanak reinforced the efforts of Kabir. Just then Chaitanya, a contemporary of Nanak, introduced esoteric emotionalism in the Vaishnava faith and popularised it through *Kirtans* (*i. e.* ecstatic dancing to the accompaniment of instrumental music and rapturous repetition of the divine name.) His transparent sincerity and charming personality effected the Hindus and the Muslims alike and one of his principal disciples was Haridas a convert from Islam. The south had a galaxy of powerful devotional saints during this period. They made loving devotion to God as the *summum bonum* of life and taught their disciples to look upon humanity as a whole as their affectionate brethren. The same tendency is noticed among the contemporary Sufi saints of Islam. Some of them were so highly impressed with the doctrines of *Bhakti* and *Vedanta* that they composed spiritual allegories predominantly couched in Hindu ideology. Others adopted Hindu names and Vaishnava doctrines and lived like Hindu devotees.

Thus by the beginning of the 16th century mutual hatred, jealousy and dislike had gradually made room for mutual respect and good-will. Despite a continued struggle extending over 300

or in a sense even 800 years, Hinduism still remained the dominant faith in India and even a bigot like Badaoni was constrained to admit that they "were in every way superior in reputation to all learned and trained men for their treatises on morals, and on physical and religious sciences, and in religious ecstasies, and stages of spiritual progress and human perfections brought forward proofs based on reason and traditional testimony, for the truth of their own and the fallacy of our religion and inculcated their doctrine with such firmness and assurance.....the truth of which the doubts of the sceptic could no more shake....." Zainul-abidin the ruler of Kashmir anticipated Akbar by abolishing *Jizya*. In Bengal there was a hybrid cult of *Satyapir* and the rulers of the Husaini dynasty in Bengal acquired great fame and popularity by promoting Bengali language and literature and treating their Hindu subjects with sympathy and good-will. By that time it had become patent that all efforts at destroying the Hindus were doomed to failure and the persecutors only hastened the ruin of their own dynasty. Men of intelligence and discernment did not fail to notice that in the past only those Sultans had been more successful who had secured cooperation and good-will of at least a section of the Hindus. History also testified to the fact that the power of the Sultans had failed to acquire stability mainly because of the opposition of the Hindus. The position at the beginning of the 16th century may therefore be summarised as:

(1) Moral stamina and spiritual superiority of the Hindu had been unmistakably demonstrated and his vitality was testified by the growth of numerous sects of religious reform.

(2) Neither the Hindus nor the Muslims could completely eliminate the other to establish their undisputed supremacy but by mutual cooperation they could acquire strength and stability and lead a life of happiness and joy.

(3) The Hindus could submit to political sovereignty or even be steadfast in their devotion to their rulers but they could not bear attacks on their conscience nor give up their convictions for fear or favour.

(4) Despite persistence of narrow-minded bigotry in certain quarters the spirit of flying at the throats of each other was making room for a spirit of harmony, friendship and cooperation.

The atmosphere in which Timur and his successors had grown up was dominated by the thoughts and beliefs of the Changezkhanids. Changez himself believed in a pseudo Buddhistic faith. But he freely participated in the religious ceremonies of his subjects of diverse creeds. His descendants also had no trace of bigotry in them. That is why they could join in ceremonial prayers of the Christians, Muslims or Buddhists as if

The Timurid
tradition

they were the followers of the same faith. According to one genealogical table Timur was related to Changez by ties of kinship and had latitudinarian affinities to Changez. He took special interest in religious matters and it is said of him that green-turbaned Shaikhs were as indispensable for him as soldiers. He too was free from bigotry and appeared in different guises of a Shia, a Sunni, a *mujahid*, a Ghazi or an infidel by turns. This applies more or less to the other members of his family as well.

The Timurid rulers of India had in their veins a blend of the Timurid and Changezkhanid blood because the mother of Babar was the daughter of the Mughal Prince Yunas Khan. Thus family tradition should make them liberal in outlook. But they had great political ambition as well. When Asoka got interested in religion, he stopped the sound of the trumpet and preached instead the doctrines of Buddhism. But Timur like Kanishka continued fighting till the very end and acquired such power by his wars that he called himself the Caliph of the age.

Babar, the first Timurid Badshah of Delhi had a strong faith in Allah and honestly believed that a prayer inspired with humility and meekness and welling forth from a sincere heart did not go unanswerd. He was careful about the *namaz* and the *roza*. But in many other respects his religious life was tainted with sin. He made free use of wine, opium and *bhang* and although on a number of occasions, he took a solemn vow before God to desist from drink in future, he forgot his vows and took to his cups again when surrounded by genial company in the pleasure garden of nature he listened to poetry with the moon shining above and friends coaxing below to have a sip again. The *Saqi* girls came to their own again and Babar forgot the limits imposed by religion to move freely in the world of emotions. Blinded by ambition, he embraced the Shia faith and made his submission to a Shia ruler. This shows that he did not attach much importance to the ritualistic aspect of Islam and did not permit the principles of his faith to interfere in his personal pleasures or ambitions. God and religion were to him a haven of refuge, not a bar to his happiness or progress. Because of such a mental attitude, he did not ordinarily persecute any sect or creed. He married a Shia wife, gave her his warmest affection and made her son the heir to his throne. But he loved the company of learned men and he himself composed canonical works which he always remembered with pride and pleasure.

His son and successor Humayun was in many respects like his father. But he was more strongly drawn towards the mystical aspect of religion. He followed in the footsteps of his

father and used intoxicants though he was fonder of opium than of wine and sold his conscience to secure a worldly gain. The mother of his successor was a Shia. Bairam Khan his principal adviser and *ataliq* of the heir-apparent and Shah Abul Maali, his special favourite were Shias. But he had much stronger interest in spiritual matters. While in Badakhshan, he had thought of renouncing the world and adopting the life of *darwish*. In later life too, he had strong sufistic leanings and accepted Shiaism only after a great inner struggle and hard persuasion by his closest friends and well-wishers. He had organised the court in a sufistic pattern and had made seating arrangements to conform with his description of himself as the sun and the courtiers as planets and stars.

Akbar was born of the Shia daughter of a cultured Sufi family of Trans-oxiana. His father was friendly to the Shias and their doctrines although by personal conviction he was a Suuni of strong sufistic leanings. Thus he could not have inherited bigotry or fanaticism from his parents, while his environment also induced in him a spirit of toleration and harmony. Born under the roof of a Rajput, he grew up under the care of teachers some of whom were Shias and one, believer in the doctrine of Sulh-i-kul (Peace with all). His first contact with Indian life was made in Punjab where Nanak and his successors were developing a spirit of concord between Hindus and Muslims and whose disciples included members of both the communities. There were many groups of people whose religious doctrines were a medley of Hinduism and Islam. Many Punjabi Muslims worshipped *Bhawani*, *Durga* and *Shitla* and engaged Brahmin priests to supervise over their religious ceremonies. It was in such an atmosphere that the boy Akbar grew up. He had a sharp penetrating intelligence and a native genius for adapting the circumstances to his wishes with an equal measure of Timur's and Babar's ambition. He therefore began his career with the object of establishing an all-India empire and adapted his policy to that end.

Search for truth was natural with Akbar. From the very beginning he had been impressed by the existence of great divergence of views in religious matters and he was anxious to find out wherein truth really lay. Born of a Sunni father, he naturally adopted Sunni practices. At the same time he also believed in the efficacy of prayer, meditation, trance, and repetition of the holy name. Badaoni says that the Emperor sometimes spent the whole night repeating '*Ya hu*' '*Ya hadi*'. He had repeatedly gone on pilgrimage to the tomb of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti and for the longevity of his son, he left nothing undone to secure the blessings of Shaikh Salim Chishti. For some time he had such profound reverence for Shaikh

Abd-un-nabi that he would bring him his slippers and accepted all that he said as true Islam. But he was never a bigoted Sunni. He was seeker after truth and had the good sense to realize that in order to delve deep into the wisdom of others and to appreciate their views correctly, a spirit of respect and reverence towards them was absolutely necessary. That is why when he approached the Sunnis in his search for truth, he regarded them as the very embodiment of piety and religion. But when he found that he had seen all their wares, he turned his eyes in a different direction and established intimate contacts with Christians, Jains, Parsis, Hindus, Shias and Sufis. He had the same reverential attitude towards them so that he soon had an access to all their treasures. Nowhere did he feel that he had found what he was after. If that had happened, he would have halted his journey for good. But although in each quarry he discovered precious gems of value and excellence he nowhere found the purest gem divine he was sedulously looking for. The moment he espied some gem of value in a particular religion, he was drawn towards it and made an intellectual effort to dive to its deepest depths. As certain imperfections came to his view he naturally turned to other directions. That is why the followers of different religions were deluded in the belief at one time or the other that he was ripe for conversion to their faith. But Akbar attached no special significance to outer labels. He was therefore unwilling to change the badge of Sunnism for something else.

Akbar always had a strong faith in the Divine existence. He had a catholic temper and great respect for the rituals of his faith. He had noticed in his family, courtiers and subjects that different people worshipped the ultimate reality in a variety of ways and despite strong ties of kinship and affection were unwilling to make any compromises in regard to their cherished views and practices. He therefore came to the conclusion that as a ruler he must allow everybody the right to worship God as he thought best. That is why he abolished the Pilgrim Tax in 1563. His courtiers warned him that this would entail the loss of crores of rupees but Akbar paid no heed to this. His contention was that it could never be a part of religion to put obstacles in the path of worship of God and a mere payment of 6 1/4 rupees could not make virtue of a vice. He therefore allowed the Hindus unrestricted freedom to visit their holy places and abolished the pilgrim Tax imposed on them.

This generosity had a political motive. Akbar knew that the Sultans of Delhi had failed to secure the devotion of all Muslims even by persecuting the Hindus. He was also aware that a vendetta against the Hindus could neither lead to their extermination nor to the strengthening of the roots of the empire.

He therefore considered it more expedient to conciliate and befriend them. Thus political expediency recommended religious toleration. To reinforce the same motive, he abolished the *Jizya* in 1564. Zain-ul-abidin had already done so in Kashmir. Besides, the Hindus hated paying the *Jizya* and was therefore not easy to levy throughout the empire. It thus produced great irritation but no corresponding gains in revenue. Thirdly, there was no unimpeachable justification for realizing it. If tradition were to be the guide, it could be imposed only on the Jews and Christians. If it were a sort of scutage in return for exemption from military service, it could no longer be imposed when the Hindus had already been enrolled in the imperial army. If it were expected that the imposition of *Jizya* would induce conversions by economic pressure the history of the last 350 years belied the hope completely. If it were a penalty for disbelief in Islam, it was contrary to law because the Quran itself prescribed that faith could not be induced by compulsion. If it were a means of humiliating the Hindus, it was both senseless and harmful because the Hindus did not lose faith in their religion despite centuries of Muslim rule over them. Besides an attempt to rule a country on the basis of permanent alienation of more than two-thirds of its population was bound to end in failure. Akbar therefore held firmly to his resolve to abolish the *Jizya*. In 1579, it was complained that it was being realized in a part of the empire. He not only immediately stopped it but also sent fresh *farmans* throughout the empire reiterating its permanent abolition.

He was anxious to have an authentic knowledge of the principles of his faith. With that end in view, he availed himself of guidance from Shaikh Aud-un-nabi and Makhdum-ul-mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri since 1565. Upto 1574, he was under their influence and ruled, on the whole, according to Sunni principles. The *Sadr* was incharge of the Ecclesiastical and judicial departments and administered public charities. *Haj* pilgrims received subsidies from state and a separate officer called *Mir Haj* was appointed to look after their other amenities. But he often had the feeling that if an authoritative commentary on the *Quran* could be prepared giving a rational and well documented interpretation of all important matters, internal dissensions of Islam might be ended and reliable information about the true tenets of the faith could be secured.

He therefore decided to collect together all the learned theologians of the land. In 1575 was built at Sikri an *Ibadat-khana* (House of worship) with capacity to seat 500 persons. There an assembly was convened every Thursday evening and entered into a discussion on some religious question. Akbar

at first invited only Sunnis to these assemblies. The more notable persons among those who participated in the debates were Makhbun-ul-mulk, Abd-un-nabi, Qazi Yaqub, Mulla Badaoni, Haji Ibrahim, Shaikh Mubarak and Abdul Fazl. He had hoped to acquire true knowledge of the principles of his faith by association with these learned men but when they started quarrelling at the very outset about precedence in seats, the Emperor intervened to decide that the Sayyads, Shaikhs theologians and nobles should occupy the western, northern, southern and eastern sides of the hall respectively.

The debates and discussions started. There was such an ugly demonstration of vulgarity, vanity and narrow-mindedness that the Emperor in his disgust asked Badaoni to submit to him names of all those who indulged in abuse or came to

Debates

blows with one another and administered a stern warning that those who were guilty of those lapses in future would be excluded from the assembly. But this had no salutary effect and they started casting dirty aspersions against one another. There were three prominent ideological groups in the assembly: (1) the supporters of Makhbun-ul-mulk, (2) the followers of Abd-un-nabi and (3) younger element composed of persons like Haji Ibrahim and Abul Fazl who represented the views of the Emperor. Instead of posing questions himself, Akbar deputed these young men to do so on his behalf while the other two groups were expected to remove their doubts and to explain things to them. During these discussions, some people exposed the vices of Makhbun-ul-mulk. Many anecdotes, compromising his integrity, were related. Khan-i-Jahan told the assembly that in order to help himself to the money payable to the Haj pilgrims, he had given the *fatwa* that pilgrimage to Mecca did not promote piety but sin because none of the two routes was safe for Sunni Muslims. He also told them that he transferred all his property to his wife towards the end of every year and thus evaded payment of *Zakat* on the ground that no property had been in his possession for the whole year. It was also related how he made illicit gains out of grants payable to the poor and the indigent, the saint and the scholar. Many of these charges were correct. Hence he suffered greatly in public estimation and retaliated by writing a book charging Abd-un-nabi with murder and disrespect to his father. He went on to assert that as the Shaikh was suffering from piles it was not proper that he should lead the public prayer. The result of these dirty tactics was that by 1578-1579 Akbar lost all respect for their character.

His experiences about their learning were no better. Once he made a reference about the maximum number of legal marriages at a time. In order to satisfy Akbar, Abd-un-nabi

said that one of the *Mujahids* (authoritative commentators) had permitted 18 *nikahs* (legal Muslim marriages) while another had himself married 9 wives. But when the Emperor spoke of it at the assembly of the learned, they pronounced it to be incorrect and said that only four full marriages were legal although by *Muta* (contractual marriages for a specified period) sanctioned by Imam Malik, any number of marriages could be legally contracted. When the matter was once more referred to Abd-un-nabi, he said that he had referred only to divergence of views among scholars and had no intention of legalising illegal marriages. This greatly offended Akbar. Finally, the scholars approved the proposal of Badaoni and all marriages of the Emperor were declared legal. Badaoni's proposal was that as decision of a *Qazi* was binding on all, the question of the Emperor's marriages on a *Muta* basis for life should be referred to a *Qazi* of the Maliki school who would naturally pronounce them as legal and valid. The Emperor acted on this advice and all his wives irregularly taken were recognized as legally married.

A discussion on the tenets of Islam led to such divergence of views that they started calling one another *kafirs*. The moment argument was started, they lost their temper. This showed to the Emperor that although their minds were burdened with much bookish knowledge they had no access to mellowed wisdom, and were singularly lacking in a spirit of scientific enquiry.

The Emperor now invited followers of the other sects of Islam as well. He had hoped that the Sunnis might form a united front against these newcomers. But that never happened. On the contrary, the discussions degenerated to a still lower-level.

The Emperor therefore opened to the followers of other religions the Ibadatkhana debates. This too did not prove fruitful. In all discussions a common tendency was noticed—"my religion is the best and the proof of the truth of my religion lies in its scriptures". But nobody was able to proceed far with intelligence and reason as the guide.

These discussions were indirectly beneficial to the Emperor because he found some members of the assembly highly talented and gifted with a penetrating vision. He held private discussions with them which enabled him to form his opinions on a sound basis.

The account given by Badaoni of Akbar's anti-Islamic measures reveals the names of persons and groups which had particularly influenced the views of Akbar. In 1557, he had experienced such a strong repulsion for worldly life that he had run away from home. In 1562, his heart had been filled with great anguish and pain so that the colourful aspect of life became a torture to

Spiritual Preceptors of Akbar

him. He had therefore numerous nightly escapades from home in disguise to sit at the feet of Hindu and Muslim saints, but nowhere did he find the truth of his choice. His contact with Muslim divines between 1565-1578 impressed on his mind that neither Islam nor for that matter any other religion was the only true religion nor was it possible to know what it really stood for by association with these learned men.

The inadequacy of Muslim divines forced him to look for light in other faiths. Thus Akbar invited some Brahmins, chief among whom were Purushottam and Debi Pandit. Impressed by their views and personality, the Emperor learnt to honour Hindu practices and beliefs and accepted the doctrine of transmigration of soul. Under Birbal's influence, he became a sun-worshipper and instead of facing towards the west preferred to face towards the east at the time of prayer and meditation. Impressed by his arguments, he realized the sanctity of the cow, the sacred thread and the ceremonial mark on the forehead. Shaikh Tajuddin Dehlawi impressed on his mind that the Emperor was *Insan-i-Kamil* and *Sijda* (prostration) before him was legal. In such changed circumstances, Akbar could no longer stick to *namaz* and *roza* with scrupulous rigidity. He learnt from Shaikh Yaqub Kashmiri that Satan or the Devil was also a form of God and played an important part in the spiritual progress of the individual. A number of Parsis came to him from Navasari. Among them Dastur Meharji Rana exercised the greatest influence on the Emperor and recommended constant preservation of fire at the court. Their arguments strengthened his respect for daily oblations to the fire practised by Birbal and the Hindu wives of the Emperor. He recognized Christian piety and humility as essential elements of religion and he restricted animal slaughter under the influence of the Jains. Among the Jains, Hiravijaya Suri, Vijaya sen Suri and Bhanu Chandra Upadhyaya deserve special mention. He met Hiravijaya Suri in 1582 for the first time. He was so profoundly impressed by his views that he gave up hunting and fishing and gave him the title of *Jagadguru* (the teacher of the world). He conceded to the Jains the facilities demanded by them in regard to their holy places. Among Muslims, the greatest influence was exercised by Abdul Latif in the earlier, and by Abul Fazl in the later part of his reign. The views of Akbar had such a close affinity with those of Abul Fazl that he showed him honours worthy of the *Wazir*. Badaoni's assertion that he was a mean time-serving flatterer who acted as his yes-man only to secure promotion in life is a base and malicious lie. Abul Fazl was a liberal, rationalistic, god-fearing Muslim who would shun no rays of light no matter what direction they came from and earnestly believed that a real seeker after Truth was bound to turn in the direction from which he could expect light and would

refuse to confine it within the limiting walls of the rituals of any particular religion. Similar was the attitude of Akbar. They were both so great in their own respective spheres that it is hard to believe that either of them would have slavishly adopted the views of the other. On the contrary, it was their singular good fortune that they had such a wide measure of agreement on fundamentals. Akbar had keen intelligence and depth of vision. He had the capacity to respect truth wherever he discerned it. Abul Fazl added to this a deep and wide learning which enabled him to buttress the views of the Emperor with learned arguments based on approved authority. That is why he exercised a tremendous influence on the Emperor. Akbar was firmly convinced that every religion contained an element of truth but no religion can be described as true or false for all the people. Everybody should have the freedom to accept a religion of one's choice and teachers of all religions should have an opportunity to propagate their views so that men of discernment may pick and choose whatever different doctrines that appealed to them in various religions.

Akbar based his policy on his own experiences, the condition of the people and political exigencies of the hour, and once these were formulated enforced it with vigour and confidence. He gave full freedom of religious worship and propagation of views to all creeds and communities and abolished all religious restrictions and taxes which interfered with it. He had abolished the Pilgrim Tax as early as 1563. With the extension of the empire to other areas, fresh *farmans* were issued to reiterate this abolition from time to time. Thus when the Jains complained that local officers demanded it from Jain pilgrims to *Shatrunjaya* he promptly issued a fresh prohibitory order for that particular region. He followed the same policy in regard to the *Jizya*. Everybody was permitted to erect new places of worship for his coreligionists. Thus the Hindus built many new temples and Christian Churches also came into existence. The Hindus were freely admitted to all high offices for which they were found qualified and they held the highest *mansabs*, provincial governorships and even the office of the highest minister at court.

He issued fresh regulations affecting habits of food and drink. On one excuse or the other, no animal-slaughter could take place on half the days of the year. He prohibited cow-slaughter on the basis of a medical bulletin stating that beef was injurious to health and caused many dangerous diseases. Those who indulged in unauthorised killing of animals were ordered to be punished with death.

He permitted *Sijda* in the court though he did not make it obligatory. In order to remove the uncertainties caused by

divergence of opinion among Muslim scholars, he accepted the *Mahzar* (solemn declaration) in 1579 which was presented by the leading theologians of the realm in the form of a *fatwa*.

Badaoni says that the theologians first discussed among themselves the attributes of a *Mujtahid* and the relation between the ruler and the *Mujtahid*. In the light of this discussion a declaration was drawn up by Shaikh Mubarak and signed by himself and Makhadum-ul-mulk, Abd-un-nabi, Qazi Jalaluddin Multani, Ghazi Khan Badakshi, the *Mufti* of the empire and the *Qazi-ul-Quzat*. According to Badaoni, everybody except Shaikh Mubarak signed the document against their convictions. The *Mahzar* ran as follows ;—

“Whereas Hindustan is now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and beneficence, a large number of people, especially learned men and lawyers, have immigrated and chosen this country for their home. Now we, the principal *Ulema* who are not only well-versed in the several departments of the Law and in the principles of jurisprudence, and well acquainted with the edicts which rest on reason or testimony, but are also known for our piety and honest intentions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first, of the verse of the *Quran*, “Obey God, and obey the prophet and those who have authority among you”, and secondly, of the genuine Tradition: “Surely the man who is dearest to God on the day of judgment is the *Imam-i-adil* ; whosoever obeys the Amir, obeys Thee”, and thirdly of several other proofs based on reasoning and testimony; and we have agreed that the rank of *Sultan-i-adil* is higher in the eyes of God than the rank of a *Mujtahid*. Further we declare that the king of Islam, Amir of the Faithful, shadow of God in the world, Abul Fath Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar Padshah Ghazi . . . is a most just, a most wise and a most God-fearing king. Should therefore in future a religious question come up, regarding which the opinions of the *Mujtahids* are at variance, and His Majesty in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation, and as a political expedient, any of the conflicting opinions, which exist on that point, and issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on us and on the whole nation.

Further, we declare that, should His Majesty think fit to issue a new order, we and the nation shall likewise be bound by it, provided always that such order be not only in accordance with some verse of the *Quran* but also of real benefit to the nation . . .”

The *Mahzar* thus empowered the Emperor to issue orders against the *Quran* or public interest. Smith is therefore wrong

in calling it the "Infallibility Decree" because it did not give the Emperor unlimited power of legislation at will. We can only say that it enabled the Emperor to give a legal basis to his autocracy but the constitutional right of opposing his orders did not altogether disappear.

Malleson says that it enabled the Emperor to deal with Hindus, Jains and Christians on terms of equality. Smith rightly rejects this inference as baseless. Buckler and Makhan Lal Roy Choudhury describe it as the means of repudiating the superiority of the rulers of Persia and Turkey which however does not appear to be based on cogent arguments. It might have incidentally led to any beneficial results but the main object underlying it was to secure subservience of the *ulema* and ensure their support to the future policy of the Emperor.

Another incident which has greatly exercised the imagination of contemporary and later thinkers is the foundation of the *Din-i-Ilahi*. Mohsin Fani, the author of

Foundation of the
Din-i-Ilahi (1581)

Dabistan-i-Mazahab describes it as a *Mazhab* (i. e. religion). Smith accepts it as an attempt

at founding a new religion and on that ground calls it a monument of Akbar's folly. But such a hypothesis is not justified by facts. Akbar's intimate knowledge of the precepts of different faiths particularly attracted him towards certain doctrines. He made a mental inventory of them in the beginning and later directed Abul Fazl to reduce them to writing. There were many people in those days both among the Hindus and the Muslims who looked upon the king as worthy of special reverence as a representative or partial incarnation of God. Akbar had certain visions and experiences too. In 1578, he had an extremely wonderful experience and it appeared for a time that he would turn a *derwish*. But he later changed his mind when it was represented to him that shouldering the responsibilities of state was also a means of service to God. As a result of private discussions, he had acquired such wide knowledge of the practical aspect of different religions that not only the superstitious ignorant masses but even more esteemable persons had been highly impressed by the Emperor's spiritual life and attainments. They had impressed on the credulous that the Emperor possessed miraculous powers of healing diseases by mere breathing over the man in a set pattern or conferring his benedictions on him. In such circumstances, Akbar formulated certain religious precepts and rules of conduct and those who adopted them came in closer contact with him. But he made no special arrangement for propagating these rules and precepts among the people. Nor did he lay down any special ceremonial for worship or erect distinctive places of worship. His position could be likened to that of a Shaikh

or a saint who was regarded as the spiritual guide by those who associated with him on the spiritual plane. The disciples were divided into four grades according to the extent of their self-surrender to the Emperor. The Emperor had established this order only to place before the people an ideal of morality, restraint and tolerance and an opportunity to emulate his example.

(1) The initiate had to accept the Emperor as his spiritual preceptor. The prospective initiate appeared before the Emperor on a Sunday and taking off his turban in his hands, placed his forehead on the feet of the Emperor. This signified that he had freed himself from vanity and selfishness and had turned his attention towards the adoration of God and prayed to the Emperor to guide him into its secrets.

(2) The Emperor next raised up the man and replaced his turban on his head which indicated that he had accepted him as a disciple. He was then supplied with a *Shast* bearing the superscription *Allah-o-Akbar* and a Divine name which was to serve as the *mantram* for the novice.

(3) The disciple was expected to reform his conduct by emulating the Emperor and receiving from him oral instruction whenever necessary.

(4) Disciples greeted fellow-disciples with the words *Allah-o-Akbar* and the other party returned the greeting with the words "*Jalla Jalal hu*". The object underlying this was said to be to remind them constantly of gratefully remembering the name of Allah.

(5) The ceremonial dinner and the funeral ceremonies after death should be held in one's life-time.

(6) Each member had to give a feast on his birthday and distribute alms among the poor to improve his prospects in the world hereafter.

(7) Members of the order abstained from non-vegetarian dishes but they could offer them to others without touching them personally. In the month of their birth they could neither entertain others to non-vegetarian meals nor attend parties where such meals were served.

(8) Cohabitation was permitted only for bearing children.

(9) They were instructed to forgive those who did them wrong and to face anger with mildness.

(10) Renunciation of worldly desires.

(11) They were advised to contemplate on the effects of *Karma* and to promote wisdom and devotion.

(12) They should observe rules of health and personal hygiene.

(13) They ought to converse with others in sweet and mild tones and do good to everybody.

(14) They should employ their soul in realization and adoration of God.

Abul Fazl says that the Emperor was usually indifferent and at times positively averse to accepting disciples. But he gave in at the special and insistent requests of the Grades of disciples people so that thousands of persons had been enrolled. Most notable among them were Abul Fazl, Faizi, Shaikh Mubarak and Raja Birbal. There were four grades among the disciples. They were expected to sacrifice in the service of the Emperor their (1) Life, (2) property, (3) honour and (4) religious convictions. On the basis of willingness to sacrifice one, two, three or all the four of these, a disciple belonged to the first, second, third or the fourth grade.

Akbar's policy of religious toleration, equality and concord did not meet with uniform approval in all quarters. The classes that had so far been neglected, suppressed or repressed became his ardent admirers. Thus Hindus, Jains, Parsis *etc.* were satisfied with his policy and they became the servants and supporters of his empire. Further, as a result of his policy superstition and empty ritual lost its hold on the intelligentsia and a attitude of independence and rationalism gradually took its place. But those who had fondly hoped for the Emperor's conversion to their faith were sorely disappointed. The Christians, feeling cock-sure of his conversion, had given currency to funny stories. They informed their countrymen that the Emperor had retained only one wife for himself and distributed the rest among his courtiers, that he had destroyed all copies of the *Quran* so that not a single copy of it was to be found in Lahore, that no mosque was used for Muslim prayers and so on.

Bigoted Muslims got dissatisfied. They were opposed to all toleration on principle. Hence failure to persecute other faiths was in their judgment tantamount to neglect of Islam. Since Akbar instituted an enquiry into the conduct and character of the *Qazis* and the *Ulema* and all those who were found unworthy were deprived of their offices and grants, this too caused discontent. He had placed restrictions on the use of meat and this was regarded as an encroachment on the principles of Islam. Badaoni has made an assiduous collection of Emperor's anti-Islamic measures. But he has been guilty of great distortion, misrepresentation and at times of baseless lies.

In 1575, *Muta* marriage was declared legal and the royal seal bore the expression *Allah-o-Akbar*. In 1578-1579, *sijda* was permitted at court and signatures on the *Mahzar* were secured under duress. In 1580, permission was granted to shave the beard

The so-called Anti-Islamic Measures

and in 1581-1582 hostile Mullahs and Shaikhs were deported to Qandahar where they were exchanged for colts. He promulgated the *Din-i-Ilahi*, and appropriated to himself the dignity of the prophet and God. He domesticated dogs and pigs and permitted the use of embroidered silken clothes. He destroyed copies of the *Quran* and placed restrictions on the teaching of Arabic. In 1583-1584, he converted mosques into stables and permitted gambling and money-lending on interest. Under the influence of the Hindus, he prohibited slaughter of the cows, started sun-worship and adopted Hindu practices and festivals. He permitted Christians to build Churches, had the Bible translated into Persian and kept the portraits of Christ and Mary on his person. He prohibited *Haj* and forbade the use of Ahmad and Muhammad in Muslim names.

Many of the above statements are petty or distorted. The Emperor remained a Muslim till the end of his life and he retained the word Muhammad as a part of his name. He raised a structure over the foot-mark of the Prophet and called it

A review of the above charges
Qadam Rasul. How can it then be held that he hated the very name of Muhammad? He punished all those that were found corrupt, immoral or rebellious and paid no allowance for their supposed piety. This can neither be called unjust nor anti-Islamic. *Muta* marriage was sanctioned on Badoni's own recommendation and there is no definite evidence that the *Ulema* did not sign the *Mahzar* in all good faith. Similarly, other charges also cannot bear the light of scrutiny. The Emperor neither neglected Arabic nor showed disrespect to the *Quran* or the mosques. He had only put down those leaders of disaffection who in the guise of Mullahs set up Arabic schools to use them as convenient platforms for sowing the seeds of disaffection against the Emperor. These unscrupulous people had incorporated in the *Quran* passages suited to their purpose. It was these garbled and tampered copies of the *Quran* that were destroyed and the so-called mosques used by these persons were abandoned and fell into a state of ruin. Till the end of his reign, Akbar retained faith in Allah showed reverence to Muslim saints and their tombs, gave facilities to *Haj* pilgrims and maintained an Ecclesiastical Department manned by Muslim theologians. Thus none but the narrow minded bigots dead-set against accepting the truth can fail to admire the religious policy of this benevolent monarch.

Jahangir was born of a Rajput mother and had grown up in the atmosphere of *Ibadatkhana* debates. His teacher Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan was under the influence of Vaishnava doctrines and it was widely believed that though he described himself a Sunni, he was at heart a Shia. Jahangir had had opportuni-

Religious views of
 Jahangir

ties of coming in close contact with Brahmin pandits, Christian missionaries and Jain scholars. Because of the influence of his father, the court and the Royal Household was surcharged with an atmosphere of religious toleration and rationalism. The result was that Jahangir imbibed these liberal tendencies and his religious views became enlightened and liberal. He had respect for the teachings of Islam and retained this attitude till the end of his life because he too introduced no change in the organisation of the Ecclesiastical Department and rewarded those who got converted to Islam and penalised those who turned away from it. He prohibited public sale of wine and set apart 25% of the net gains from escheated property for the construction of mosques. But he can by no means be described staunch or even an orthodox follower of the principles of his faith. He was himself addicted to drink and initiated his own son Khurram into the habit. Nor was he very regular in *roza* and *namaz*. He too imposed restrictions on animal-slaughter and once forbade sacrifice even on the Id day because it happened to coincide with the day on which according to his former regulations no animal-slaughter could be made. He was friendly to the Christians and kept portraits of Christ and Mary in his bed-room. He held religious discourses with a Hindu saint named Yadurup and participated in the celebration of Hindu festivals. All this shows that he too was liberal and tolerant like his father.

Jahangir's public policy was also liberal. He did not seek to revive the *Jizya* or the Pilgrim tax and the Hindus still occupied high office and enjoyed the freedom to erect new temples. Consequently in Mathura, Gokul and Brindaban many new temples were built during his reign. The Christians were also permitted to build and maintain places of worship for themselves. But some of his acts smack of harshness and discrimination. After the conquest of Kangra, he destroyed the local *Jwalamukhi* temple because according to his judgment the priests practised great deception on the credulous masses. Similarly, he ordered destruction of the *Varah* temple at Pushkar near Ajmer because he was convinced that God could never have incarnated himself in that form. But even though his action might be rationally sound, he committed the grave error of disregarding the freedom of conscience of others in upholding his own religious predilections. He suspected the Jains of having sided with Khusrau and on that ground banished them from empire. On the same charge, he imposed a fine of two lakhs of rupees on Guru Arjun and when he refused to pay the fine put him to death on charge of treason. When offended by the conduct of Christians, he had their church closed down. But the only conclusion that can be drawn from these various stray incidents is that Jahangir was not always careful to avoid wounding religious susceptibilities of others. But

it cannot be maintained that he persecuted the Hindus, the Jains, the Christians or the Sikhs as a community. His action affected only an individual or a particular locality and each instance of alleged religious persecution had some non-religious motive at its base. It is therefore difficult to say that he had adopted a policy of religious intolerance or persecution. We can only say that he gradually helped in building up a background for later religious persecution and he seems to have been more anxious to keep the Muslims satisfied than the members of other communities.

Orthodox Muslims did not like the views of Akbar and Jahangir and there was some resentment among them. Shahjahan was $\frac{3}{4}$ Rajput by parentage. But from the very outset, he was more staunchly attached to the tenets of Islam. He was regular in *roza* and *namaz* and as long as he was in the capital he never neglected the *roza*. In his old age he could not keep it up, and therefore, paid expiation money for this remissness. He did not shave his beard and lived in the usual Muslim style. Unlike the common run of royalty of those days, he abstained from wine and it was with great difficulty that his father had been able to induce him to sip it once in his youth at the age of 24. And even if he took up drink later, he seems to have done it with great moderation because there is no reference to his doing so except that Framlin speaks of Shahjahan placing an order for wine.

Thus both by conviction and as a concession to the attitude of his courtiers, he approximated most closely to the Islamic ideal in his public life. It could also be that it was profitable to maintain a pose of orthodoxy to allay any discontent that might have been caused by his executions at the time of his accession. Hence in his early years, a policy of religious persecution and religious discrimination in favour of Islam is clearly noticeable. He kept up a show of orthodoxy in his own life and thus inspired respect for the faith among his people. He stopped *sijda*, forbade the use of the royal portrait as an adornment to the cap or the turban and restored the use of the *Hijri* era in place of the *Ilahi* era. He forbade Hindus to keep Muslim slaves, to marry Muslim wives or to live in Muslim style. Those who had Muslim wives were ordered either to forsake them or marry them afresh by *nikah* after their own conversion to Islam. Dāpat Rai of Sarhind was subjected to great tortures for contravening this order and was finally hacked to death. In 1633, he ordered wholesale demolition of all newly built temples and in Benares alone 72 temples were destroyed. Similarly destructions took place in Allahabad, Gujerat and Kashmir. During Jujhar Singh's rebellion, a number

of temples were destroyed at Orchha and some of them were replaced by mosques.

He also assumed the role of a defender and propagator of Islam. It has already been mentioned how he reclaimed Muslim women from Hindu families. He spent Rs. 30,000/- every year in public charities in the month of Ramzan and sent forty to fifty thousand rupees every year for charities at Mecca. He established a separate department for securing conversions to Islam. This department carried on proselytising activities through Muslim preachers and an imperial *farman* forbade Hindus to put any obstacles in the path of this department by counter-propaganda or otherwise. Many people embraced Islam in consideration of money and office that the Emperor gave to the new convert. Bakhtawar Singh the son of Raj Singh Kachhwaha was presented Rs. 2000/- on his conversion. It was also ordained that any Hindu who got converted to Islam must immediately secure his share in his patrimony. In some cases, forcible conversions were also made as in the case of members of Jujhar Singh's family. These incidents show that Akbar's policy of religious liberty and equality was gradually being forsaken and religious discrimination, begun under Jahangir, was gaining in virulence and scope.

But even under Shahjahan, there was no permanent adoption of religious persecution as an integral element of state policy. He too did not revive the *Jizya*. He intended reviving the Pilgrim Tax but abandoned it on a representation by Kavindracharya of Benares. During the later part of his reign there is no reference to temple destruction or any other forms of religious persecution. This was probably due to the liberal tendencies of Dara and Jahanara. He continued *Jharokha darshan*, *tula-dan* (weighment against precious articles) and *Tilak* (placing a ceremonial mark on the forehead) of Hindu Rajas as a symbol of his recognition of their succession. Nor did he deprive the Hindus of high office. Jaswant Singh held the *mansab* of 6000 and Rai Raghunath held the office of *Diwan*. 20% to 25% of the higher *mansabs* were still given to the Hindus. Nor did he deprive the Hindu poets, artists and scholars of state patronage, so that Sundar Das, Chintamani, Kavindracharya, Maha Kaviray Pandit Jagannath, Sukhsen and others enjoyed his favour and patronage. He permitted the renovation of the *Chintamani* temple at Ahmadabad and at the request of the citizens of Cambay prohibited cow-slaughter there. A person guilty of killing a peacock in Orissa was subjected to severe whipping.

It would thus appear that Shahjahan had no inborn hatred for the Hindus. He considered it his duty to enable them also to live in peace, honour and contentment. But in his early years, he issued certain orders and did certain acts on grounds

of political expediency which proved harmful to certain individuals and localities. But he never adopted a general policy of discrimination, persecution and hatred and retained the affections of his Hindu subjects till the end of his reign. But his policy had one calamitous effect. Those who had welcomed his policy of persecution wanted its further elaboration. When on the other hand, they found that it was being abandoned, they were highly dissatisfied. Prince Dara was a man of liberal views and was emulating the example of Akbar. It was widely suspected that it was he who had weaned away the Emperor from his earlier policy. These people were alarmed at the prospect of his succession to the throne for they feared that it might lead to undue preponderance of Hindus. This group therefore became hostile to Dara and Aurangzeb cleverly whipped up their aversion and secured their support for himself. Thus the twin-headed policy of Shahjahan led to emergence of two rival groups in the state as the supporters of these two policies, which proved very harmful to the state and facilitated Aurangzeb's accession to the throne. If he had adopted a liberal policy from the very outset, there might have been no dissensions at Court.

By the time Aurangzeb had ascended the throne, the political and religious condition of India had undergone a great change. The Sikhs in the Punjab, the Bundelas in central India and the Marathas in the Deccan were busy acquiring political power under the guise of service to their respective faith. Also there flourished certain poets and religious reformers who inspired opposition to Muslim sovereignty. Shahjahan's reverses on the north-western frontier had lowered the prestige of the empire and encouraged Rajput intransigence. In the capital and the provinces, the problem of succession to the throne had led to sharp divisions and hostile camps, and although they were based essentially on conflicting personal interests and mutual jealousy, there were some ideological differences, for while one group supported Dara's liberalism, the other was stoutly in favour of reaction as represented by Aurangzeb. In the wars of succession, some Hindus like the Rana of Udaypur sided with Aurangzeb but a vast majority of the Rathors, Kachhwahas and Bundelas was arrayed against him. The result of the liberal policy of the empire during the last hundred years had been that many Hindus held high office and lorded over the Muslims, lived in a grand style and maintained a troop of Muslim slave girls and concubines. Many Muslims had got converted to Hinduism and numberless Muslim women formed members of Hindu families. Hindu temples were rising up everywhere and the call of the Muazzin was drowned in the thunderous clang of bells and conches. In many quarters Hindu

preachers had converted Muslims to their faith and had occupied the mosques used by them. Some of these had been converted into temples, others into quarters for residence. Complaints against these had been carried to Shalijahan. The accounts of *Padshahnama*, Vir-Vinod and Khafi Khan suggest that Hindu Rajas and Zamindars desecrated the mosques whenever they got an opportunity. Such incidents had taken place mostly in the Punjab, Rajputana, Saurashtra and the Deccan. Many Muslims—particularly from Persia and Trans-Oxiana considered it derogatory to Islam and were anxious to establish the unchallenged supremacy of Islam in India.

It was in such circumstances, that Aurangzeb had to take part in the war of succession. He acted with great prudence. In his correspondence with bigoted Muslims he referred to Dara's apostasy and exhorted them to prepare themselves for the regeneration of Islam. To the Hindus, he spoke in terms of personal devotion and promised to promote them to high *mansabs* comparable to those of the Rathors and the Kachhwahas. Thus he tried to strengthen his position. In the war of succession he secured the staunchest support from the bigoted element among the Muslims and suffered most at the hands of the Rajputs. It is in this background that he settled his future policy.

In his personal life, Aurangzeb was a staunch law-abiding Muslim. He observed the *roza* and the *namaz*, abstained from wine, led a life without blemish and spent a large part of his time in meditation and prayer. He had faith and trust in God and he regarded it as an act of piety to earn money by copying the *Quran* and sale of caps prepared by himself. He had a puritanical simplicity in respect of dress and diet but his faith in God's favour was so unshakable that even in the direst distress he was firm as the *Himalayas*. He felt assured of divine inspiration and mercy and his wide theological learning induced in him great respect for Muslim ideals. He thought that the only correct thing was to rule according to the ideals of the caliphate and looked upon himself as the guardian and protector of all his subjects and considered it his solemn duty to put down all oppression. But, he thought it was contrary to law to equate Muslims with infidels in a Muslim state. He would protect the Hindus without compromising the supremacy and superiority of the Faithful. He had hardened into these views even before he became the Emperor and was only willing to grant concessions to Hindus for a certain length of time on grounds of expediency but he could not persuade himself to make it a part of his permanent policy. He was no enemy of the Hindus and was willing to grant them all the privileges of *zimmi*s but as the head of an Islamic government he considered it his pious duty to protect and promote Islam. Faced with opposition by

Religious views of
Aurangzeb

man, he could fall back on the grace of God but he could not transgress the will of God—as he understood it—to please man. In his last letter, he speaks of departing from the world with sin and constantly reminds of the day of judgment in his letters and *farmans*. This may give an insight into the temper and character of this great man.

In one of his letters to his father, Aurangzeb says that God was the witness that he had taken up arms only in the defence of Islam. Therefore, soon after his accession he sought to remove all those anti-Islamic practices which had gained currency under

Suppression of un-Islamic Practices Akbar or Jahangir. He stopped the use of the *Kalma* on the coins; appearing at the balcony for *Jharokha* and *darshan*, weighing against precious articles and the use of intoxicants. He increased the powers of the *Muhtasib* and enjoined on him the duties of obliging the Muslims to conform to the principles of Islam, enforcing prohibition except in the case of ganja and opium, and bringing all defaulters to the court of the *Qazi* for trial and punishment. Soldiers and *Ahadis* were provided for his assistance. He forbade the use of Hindu form of salutation, discontinued the practice of placing a *tilak* on the forehead of the new Rajas and banned the use of human or animal statues. Two statues of elephants erected by Jahangir at Agra were thus removed. He put a ban on music and disbanded the entire staff of court-musicians. They demonstrated against this order by organising a funeral procession of music. But it had no effect on the Emperor who remarked that they should bury it deep enough to prevent its future resurrection. He abandoned the Nuroz festivities and drastically cut down the birthday celebrations to reduce it to a simple ceremony. He forbade covering the tombs with roofs and prohibited women from going there. He repaired and renovated old mosques and appointed for each one of them the necessary staff of *Muazzin*, *Imam*, etc.

All these changes should have caused satisfaction to the Muslims. But there was nothing in them prejudicial to the vital interests of any important community. Manucci says that the habit of drink was so universal that the Emperor is said to have once remarked in great indignation that it was strange that in a vast empire like his there were only two persons who really abstained from wine—the Emperor himself and the Chief *Qazi*. Similarly, the attempt at burying music did not succeed and the court-musicians found employment with Muslim nobles and Hindu Rajas.

Not only this, Aurangzeb issued such regulations as provoked opposition among the Hindus and led to serious disturbances and revolts. He prohibited celebration of *Holi* on public streets as also raising subscriptions for it. He made *Sati* a penal offence

Regulations against the Hindus

and imposed restrictions on Hindu *Pathshalas*, Hindu Fairs and Hindu festivals. In 1695, all Hindus except Rajputs were forbidden to bear arms or go about riding elephants, quality horses or in palanquins. It was not easy to enforce these orders but they caused much irritation and in case of interference could have led to local disturbances. The resurgent Hindu made capital of them for carrying on propaganda against the Emperor.

But the Emperor did not stop even at that. He took further steps to antagonise the Hindus. In 1659, he issued a farman stating that it was the duty of the state to protect old Hindu temples and to abstain from interference in their religious practices; but they were not to be permitted to build new temples. A little later when his power had been stabilised and Dara, Shuja, Sulaiman and Rai Raghunath the *Diwan* were dead, he issued an order in 1665 forbidding construction of human and animal statues. At the same time, all temples recently built or renovated in Gujerat were demolished. In 1666, the stone railing of the *Keshava Ray Temple* at Mathura was pulled down while in 1669 a circular order was addressed to all appropriate officers in the empire directing them to destroy all newly built temples in their respective areas. The order sent to Orissa not only directed demolition of new temples but also forbade the repair of older ones. In compliance with this order many Hindu temples were demolished including the *Keshava Ray Temple* at Mathura, although this temple had been built in the reign of Jahangir and could in no sense be described as a new construction. It is possible that the destruction of this temple might have formed a part of reprisals against the Jat rebellion which had taken place at that time. The Emperor was said to be particularly hostile to this temple because it was suspected to have been built out of moneys captured at the time of Abul Fazl's murder. Thousands of temples at Prayag, Kashi, Ayodhya, Hardwar and other holy places were destroyed. So were the temples at less important centres. This must have caused serious disturbances at least in some areas for there is definite information about a sustained and prolonged fight between the Hindus and the Muslims centring round the mosque built on the ruins of the *Veni Madhava* or *Bindu Madhava* temple at Banaras. The result was that the rioters destroyed some mosques in retaliation and the Muslims when reinforced by forces proceeded to destroy all temples both old and new. S. R. Sharma says that the reference to destroy old temples occurs only in the *farmans* sent to Bengal and Gujerat. But it appears that the Emperor in conformity with approved Islamic practice and his own *farman* of 1669 must have ordered demolition of new temples alone. Destruction of old temples might have been

ordered only as a measure of reprisal where there had been serious local disturbances. Whatever might have been the reason or the occasion but once a general order had been sent affecting temples of the whole empire, it was difficult to protect older temples. Mr. Faruki refers to existence of old Hindu temples in certain parts of the land even after 1670. But on that basis the utmost that can be said is that just as regulations regarding music and wine were not universally enforced, similarly the order relating to destruction of temples might not have been enforced where Hindu opposition was strong or where the local officers could be bribed to stay their hands. Hundreds of temples may yet be found scattered over the towns and villages of India which are anterior to 1670 but those built after that date run into lakhs. It is therefore conclusively established that between 1669-1670 thousands of Hindu temples fell a prey to the iconoclastic fury of the then rulers of India.

The Emperor adopted numerous measures to secure conversions from Hinduism. In 1665, he fixed the customs duties for the Muslims at half of what the Hindus had to pay and in 1667 he exempted them altogether. But there was no response from the Hindus to escape taxation by conversion. In 1671 he issued an order that Hindu *Peshkars*, *Karoris* and *Diwans* should be replaced by Muslims but when the Government was faced almost with a break-down because of paucity of qualified staff, the proportion of Muslims was fixed at 50% alone. It was also provided that if any discharged Hindu changed his faith, he should be immediately reinstated. Many families in the Punjab possessed *farmans* testifying to offer of government posts as a reward for conversion to Islam. In 1679, he reimposed the *Jizya* as a measure of increasing the economic pressure on the Hindus. Manucci says that many poor Hindus embraced Islam in order to escape from its burdens and the Emperor was gratified to learn this. Converts from Hinduism were rewarded with money and office and were sometimes taken around cities in procession seated on elephants. He tried to force Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ~~father~~ of Govind Singh and many other highly placed persons to embrace Islam and promised amnesty to Shambhuji and Kavi Kalash if they agreed to conversion. Thus the Emperor almost reversed the policy of Akbar. But he did not or could not exclude all Hindus from office. An insight into the frayed tempers of the day is provided by a general proposal to replace all Hindus by Muslims but the Emperor is said to have turned this down as impossible for it was not practicable to destroy or discharge all Hindus.

Aurangzeb's desire was to strengthen Islam as a means of converting the Timurid Empire in this country into a predominantly Islamic government. But he failed in the attempt. Forced

by circumstances, he had still to assign about 25% of the higher *mansabs* to Hindus. In order to conciliate these *mansabdars*, he even granted certain concessions to Brahmins and Hindu mendicants within their sphere of influence as in the case Gosains of *Veni Madhava* temple at the instance of Ram Singh Kachhwaha. But he failed to strengthen the empire or to secure substantial converts from Hinduism or cleanse it of idol-worship. His regulations regarding wine and music were disregarded even by Muslims and his policy of discrimination made the Hindus determined enemies of Islamic government but failed to win for him the confidence of the Muslims. He had both Hindus and Muslims in the army and the public services but he did not receive willing cooperation of either of them as Akbar had done. People anxiously and eagerly waiting for his death included not only his sons but also his own servants and followers. He committed great sins in the name of religion and never knew mental peace as head of the state. This perhaps was the nescapable atonement for his sins against humanity.

CHAPTER XXVI

SOCIETY AND RELIGION

Social and religious life of the people in later medieval India was more or less the same as in early medieval times. But there were a few important changes in certain spheres. Among these the most notable and of far-reaching consequence was the change in the organisation and general tenor of life at the court. The traditions of the Great Mughals affected conditions all over the country and continue to dominate the minds of the leaders of free republican India even to this day. The magnificence and glory, luxury and vice, characteristic of contemporary court-life permeated even the literary and religious compositions of the day. The entire cultural and artistic development of the land, its trade and industry or foreign imports and exports mirror the life at court and bear the indelible mark of its influence on their nature and character. A beginning may therefore be made with a review of the general features of life at the court.

COURT LIFE

The Timurids attached the greatest importance to Lahore, Delhi and Agra. At all these places and in their environs, they have left behind immortal memorials of their glory and greatness. Delhi and Agra were their capitals while Lahore though only a provincial capital had the privilege of housing the Emperor for years together because of its strategic importance on the route to the north-western frontier. The Timurids like the Sultans of Delhi had no fascination for rural surroundings. They loved cities or those moving towns of whose variegated colour and enormous size the foreign travellers speak of with unconcealed wonder and astonishment. These tented camps made adequate and even elaborate provision for the imperial seraglio, bed-rooms, bath-rooms, audience hall, prayer *etc.* The imperial household staff even in these camps contained a fair supply of eunuchs, amazonian female guards, dancing girls, maidservants, wine-bearers *etc.* Here too the department of the *Khan-i-Saman* kept ample stocks of different articles and commodities that the Emperor might require. There was a troop of cooks headed by their superintendent and furnished with all the accessories of the

Court life: Its
urban character

kitchen and the dining table. That is, the camps of the Mughals, in the best traditions of central Asia, supplied all the requirements of a cosy and luxurious life. The only difference was that the people of central Asia carried only the bare necessities of life. The Indian Timurids were great admirers of Persian culture and loved to make an ostentatious display of wealth and splendour in keeping with their dignity and reputation wherever they went. Hence the tents of these rulers were far more colourful and artistically decorated. When the royal army was in motion, each section of it had an interesting individuality of its own. Elephants, camels and mules laden with tents and other accessories moved in a slow interminable line. In utter contrast to these were the gorgeous carriages, palanquins and chandolas carrying the Emperor and his principal wives, heavily guarded by smartly dressed bodyguards and soldiers in rich and glittering armours. The outer trappings of these palanquins, horses and elephants unmistakably indicated the supreme dignity and importance of the persons occupying them. The dress and accoutrements of the nobles and their attendants were also rich and impressive but they could not make a display of profusion and prosperity comparable to that of the Emperor. Military contingents moved with their distinctive ensigns and war-bands. The traders and businessmen who supplied the wants of the soldiery and the nobility moved with their wares carefully concealing their opulence under simple clothes and humble manners. When the army encamped, it sprawled over many miles of huddled tents and busy shops.

As noticed earlier, the Timurids were great admirers of Persian culture. Their court always contained many nobles of foreign extraction. Numerically, the foreign element always predominated over the combined strength of Indian Muslims and Rajputs and it was the former who exercised the greatest influence on the general tenor of life at court. They related to the Emperor characteristic features of court life in foreign lands and whatever appealed to the fancy of the Emperor was incorporated in the life at court here. They had ample stocks of the best foreign wines, foreign fruit, choice clothes and rich carpets. The royal kitchen establishment contained excellent cooks both native and foreign who by their novel preparations bewildered and astonished unsophisticated invitees at the royal feasts. Sometimes, as many as a thousand dishes were served, a majority of which were foreign preparations. Cups, plates and dishes of different designs, sizes and artistic value, were collected from outside to supplement the local supply. The imperial *karkhanas* also produced gold and silver utensils of great beauty and excellence. On special occasions, all this

wealth and profusion was gorgeously paraded. The object of the Emperor was to impress foreign envoys with his superiority over foreign potentates in respect of wealth and magnificence, culture and refinement, prosperity and profusion. He felt that no other ruler in the world had such a choice collection of excellent foreign wares. He therefore wanted to impress on his visitors that he collectively possessed all that any foreign prince could severally command of his own native wares and withal he had a wonderous collection of all that Indian artistic talent and unfailing wealth could supply. Thus in ordering his court and household the prime consideration in the mind of the Emperor was what the foreigners would feel about it. All that they prized or that would excite their wonder and admiration or fill them with awe was carefully collected and effectively displayed.

A visitor to the imperial court was most impressed by its wealth and splendour. All the Emperors except Aurangzeb loved to bedeck themselves in choicest clothes and ornaments. This reached its apotheosis under Shahjahan. He seated himself on the Peacock Throne made of solid gold and exquisitely designed with a profusion of precious gems and stones artistically distributed over its surface to produce a most pleasing effect. The *Chhatra* (Umbrella) above the head of the Emperor was also wrought in gold and jewels. The *Diwan-i-Am* (Hall of Public Audience) and the *Diwan-i-Khas* (Hall of Private Audience) impressed the visitor not only by their excellent *pietra dura* work but also by gold-embroidered silken hangings and curtains which added both to their splendour and beauty. The floor was carpeted in costly velvets done in beautiful designs of great delicacy and charm. His dignified bearing, a full beard, grave demeanour, sweet tone and beautiful white teeth gained manifold in their effect as the Emperor sat bedecked with pearls, diamonds and other precious gems of great lustre and brilliance. His nobles and ministers also attended in rich and colourful costumes. The serried ranks of nobles, solemn movements of ministers and their utter humility in their dealings with the Emperor, guards standing smartly to attention and careful planning of even the minutest detail combined to produce a highly impressive effect.

The *Khilats* (dresses) given on various occasions were made of costly cloth and embroidered with gold and silver. Bejewelled swords and daggers and ornaments were also offered as rewards and presents. When, these were presented on special occasions to hundreds and thousands of people, the impression produced was that the Emperor had an inexhaustible store of them all.

Great festivities were held on the occasions of *Id*, *Nauroz*, *Dashahara*, *Dipawali*, the day of birth and of accession of the Emperor. The court then presented a scene of still greater

magnificence and splendour. On occasions of marriages there was a virtual rain of gold and silver everywhere and fabulous sums were spent. Lakhs of rupees were spent by Raja Bhagwan Das at the time of marriage of his daughter with Prince Salim and by Shahjahan at the time of marriages of his sons. On Dara's marriage 32 lakhs of rupees were spent, 16 lakhs by Jahanara, 10 lakhs by the bride's mother and 6 lakhs by the Emperor. On such occasions, there was such an extravagant display of charities, processions, music and dancing, feasts and festivities that they remained the subject of common talk for long afterwards.

In feasts also, display of wealth was the main objective. Each dish was dainty and delicious and should have entailed great expense and time in its preparation. An impression of plenty must be produced by serving hundreds of courses and each act of service should be done in the most refined manner and in the most beautiful and costly dishes. All that was served need not be actually taken. It was a sign of cultured wealth to leave some leavings and table manners were assiduously cultivated. Every care was taken to produce the impression that it was the very abode of the Goddess of Prosperity, a store house of beauty and that each particle of everything there testified to good taste and refinement. Every little movement from walking, accosting smiling, conversing, receiving and offering present, accepting or refusing a thing to general department and behaviour had an approved form of its own which had to be cultivated as a piece of art, and those who were found to be wanting in it were regarded by the court dandies as vulgar, barbarous and boorish and therefore worthy of contempt and ridicule. They, however, took good care not to express such sentiments in words but only through mild gestures or a slight shrug of the shoulders.

Collection of a large number of slaves of either sex from different foreign lands was inspired with the same motive of ostentatious display of wealth. On the one hand there were amazonian ladies skilled in the use of arms and smart and efficient in the discharge of their duties as bodyguards. On the other there were dainty young beauties who understood no language current in the palace or the court and whose own speech was a mere babble to all except the interpreters. The *Khwajasaras* (eunuchs), grave in demeanour, efficient in work, strong in body, shrewd and intelligent, polished and courteous, were an indispensable part of the *Harem* and were acquired from the famous slave-markets of Asia. The work and emoluments of this staff was usually in accord with their respective talents, youth and charms.

Another feature of court life was undue fondness for luxury and carnal pleasures. Crores of rupees were spent every year

on the Imperial seraglios. Legally married wives were limited in number. But the number of concubines often ran into hundreds. Then there were young maids of honour and charming slave-girls who could at any moment be promoted to the rank of concubinage. Akbar's *harem* included a total of 5000 women. The nobles of the Emperor walked in the footsteps of their masters and Raja Man Singh Kachhwaha is said to have had 1500 wives who had borne him 4000 children. Other nobles also tried to live up to these traditions of feudal glory. Illicit relations often developed even inside the royal family and an attempt was made to cover them through marriage wherever possible. But some very dirty scandals were associated with some notable figures. Foreign travellers have made a good collection of them in their writings. But they have given currency also to baseless lies *e.g.* Shahjahan's incest with his own daughter Jahanara.

Princes and Emperors of this age had a sort of general licence for debauchery both by marriage and adultery. But the royal princesses had often to remain unmarried. The atmosphere in the harem was by no means conducive to chastity and self-restraint. Woman was not an object of respect and adoration but an article of luxury. High birth and noble character were not so much in demand as youth and personal charms. The woman therefore was greatly debased. She was no longer respected as a mother and the custodian of family virtue and prosperity. She had been degraded almost to the status of a prostitute. Wives, concubines, daughters and slave-girls of rulers and nobles of this period could not be expected to become Sitas and Savitris when they knew full well the moral depravity and lewdness of the latter. The *harem* was therefore a hot-bed of corruption and vice despite strict purdah and rigorous vigilance. Bribery was freely practised to secure immunities and concessions. This does not mean that all women in the royal family were corrupt. But the baser element far outnumbered the ideally good. Most of them tried to emulate the example of their lords as best as circumstances permitted. Such opportunities were generally provided when the Emperor or the nobleman in question was absent, or when the ladies feigned illness or went out on pilgrimages or participated in general festivities.

Both men and women were addicts to intoxicants and the use of wine was a common vice. Princesses were also addicted to drink. But Rajput ladies generally refrained from it. Their personal character was also generally higher. But when the whole atmosphere was surcharged with vice and corruption, it is difficult to determine as to who really remained uncontaminated. Sensuality and lewdness was thus the most besetting vice of

life at court. Full effects of this came to light after the death of Aurangzeb.

Some of these persons were at times guilty of great enormities in pursuance of vice. The grandson of Aurangzeb's aunt Mirza Tafakhkhur by name was a terror to all young women. He would forcibly seize any woman of his fancy and violate her chastity. Akbar was also guilty of such lapses in his youth. Their sins had later to be atoned by the daughter of Muhammad Shah whom no prayer or entreaty could save from the lewd embraces of Ahmad Shah Abdali and by all those royal ladies that were drafted into concubinage by Afghans and Jats of later times.

Jahandar Shah got so enamoured of a common prostitute Lal Kumari that her kinsmen were appointed as governors of provinces. An interesting anecdote related in this connection is that Zulfikar Khan demanded 1000 *sarangis* (a stringed instrument associated with Indian dancing girls) as a bribe from the brother of Lal Kumari before issuing to him the letter of appointment as Governor of Multan. The governor-designate did present to him 200 pieces but the *Wazir* insisted on receiving the full 1000. He therefore complained to his brother-in-law, the Emperor. The latter asked Zulfikar as to what he would do with so many *sarangis*? The *Wazir* replied that as sarangi-players were being preferred for governorships he wanted to present a *sarangi* to each of the nobles of the empire so that they might adequately qualify themselves for imperial service. This silenced the Emperor.

Correct figures of expenditure on the court and the Royal Household have not come down to us. But it must have run into crores of rupees. All this money came

Misuse of public funds

mostly from the poor peasants. While their children lived in a state of semi-starvation and their womenfolk went about in tatters, the court squandered away crores of rupees in dissipation and pompous extravagance. The hard-working peasant lived from hand to mouth and if rains failed even for a year he became such a helpless victim of famine that he could hardly keep his body and soul together even by selling away his wife and children in exchange for food. On the other hand, the money that he paid to the Emperor was grossly misused over wine and women and sometimes over securing converts from his faith or even from his family. According to the precepts of Islam public money must be employed only for promoting public weal and prosperity. According to the Hindu law-books, the ruler has been likened to a father who must set an example before his subjects by his ideal conduct and regard it as his solemn duty to work for their progress and prosperity. The Timurid Emperors recognized neither the behests of Islam nor the traditions of their

infidel subjects. If they had employed the money raised from the people over spread of education, extension and improvement of roads and highways, construction of a powerful navy and amelioration of the condition of the masses, their fame would have increased a hundred-fold. But medieval monarchs all over the world were seldom drawn towards these laudable objectives. The Timurid had risen above the common run of medieval monarchy in certain respects but it is a pity that in this fundamental aspect they sank deeper than usual. The full moon of their glory stands vitiated for ever by these black spots of vice and extravagance.

But there is the other side of the shield as well. They attended to nobler pursuits and spent their resources over patronage of arts and letters, poets and philosophers while musicians and painters also shared in the royal bounty. This was done partly to enhance the dignity of their court but it proved beneficial to the people as well. We must, however, remember that the cultural progress during this period was mostly confined to towns and specially to the capital. It did not very much filter down to the masses. Some royal ladies distinguished themselves in this sphere. Salima Begam, Jahanara, Raushanara, Nurjahan, Zebunnissa *etc.* were highly cultured and refined and some of them were noted for their poetic compositions.

The nobles tried to live up to the standards of the Emperor and had the same vices and virtues. Mughal court habits were carried to Rajputana by Rajput Rajas. The nobles of this period lived in great style and European travellers testify that their standard of living was much higher than that of European monarchs and that they kept up such a show of leisured wealth and magnificence as was beyond the means of European sovereigns. They also refer to their habit of drink and low morals. The Law of Escheats passed under Jahangir had made the nobles, save few exceptions like Asaf Khan who left behind a large fortune, extremely extravagant so that they left behind nothing to be escheated to government except a load of debts. Sarkar attributes the downfall of the empire to the inadequacy of the Mughal nobility. Sons of eminent nobles did not rise to the eminence of their parents which was largely due to the peculiar ways of life of the latter. If they had possessed self-restraint, and if their wives had enjoyed honour and contentment, a strong sense of morality and real culture would have developed and most of the children would have been worthy of their parents. But where woman did not receive her due place of honour, the progeny could not develop into ideal specimens of humanity. Most young people in the noble families were drawn towards sensuality even while still in their teens. This naturally stunted full growth of their personality.

Despite these handicaps, the nobles had many laudable qualities. Most of them were generous and gave large sums of money in charity. They had a high sense of honour according to the standards of the day and Badaoni says that when Birbal was discovered to be involved in certain scandals, he decided to renounce the world and it was through imperial intervention that he was finally persuaded back. Raja Bhagwan Das when overruled in Kashmir affair sought to vindicate his honour by suicide. Todarmal would make no compromise with corruption or weakness and always maintained a high sense of public efficiency. Man Singh plainly told the Emperor that he would have no humbugging with *Din-i-Ilahi*. Sadullah Khan would not spare the wicked on Dara's intervention even though he had been marked out as the heir to the throne. Abul Fazl was so considerate that he never dismissed any of his servants and never spoke ill of any dish served before him. Many of them were great paragons of learning. Bairam Khan, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Abul Fazl, Mirza Raja Jay Singh, Sawai Jay Singh to name only a few were highly cultured, deeply read and immensely fond of the company of the learned. Many of them maintained their own set of poets, painters and musicians. Some of them were great builders and have left behind fine edifices to perpetuate their memory. Sawai Jay Singh's interest in astronomy is testified by the remains of his observatories. The nobles of the 16th and the 17th century generally inspired respect and affection among their followers which could never have been possible unless despite their viles and shortcomings they had redeeming features.

Moreland rightly observes that during the Mughal period the middle class *i.e.* the intelligentsia was almost negligible.

It is true that even in those days there were some lawyers, court-physicians and private medical practitioners and learned men of all grades and classes spread all over the country. But in proportion to the population of the land, their number was infinitesimally small. Most of these people were attached to the court either as its servants or as holders of its *madad-i-mash* (maintenance) grants. They could not therefore function freely as the intellectual leaders of the community. They usually acted as the camp-followers of the higher classes and sought to better their chances in life by ingratiating themselves in their favour. In religious matters, Muslim theologians and Brahmin pandits did exercise considerable influence on the masses of their respective communities. But they lacked the capacity to force the state to tread the path of virtue and progress by effective organisation and canalisation of the views of the masses.

Most of these persons fall in the category of servants or proteges of the state. Their income was generally low. But

within their means they tried to adopt the ways and manners of the nobility. Among these people wine was freely used particularly by Muslims, Khattris and Kayasthas and they too like the nobility loved to keep up a pretence of plenty and prosperity and used fine clothes and ornaments and on occasions of marriage and festivity indulged in extravagances beyond their means.

The position of women during this period registered a further decline. Child-marriage, polygamy, *Sati* and *purda* continued and personal respect for the fair sex went down. Maidens of higher families had no freedom of choice of their companions for life. They were given away to one or the other party as a part of the game of diplomacy and their personal likes or dislikes were generally overlooked. Many women in the noble or royal families had to live a life of neglect, suppression and indignity and yet when the husband, the author of their miseries, died, they were expected to share the funeral pyre with him to cleanse him of all his sins and to demonstrate their affection and fidelity for him. Akbar and his successors tried to interfere with *Sati* but not with much success. Abul Fazl says that the Emperor introduced many regulations about marriage. He inhibited unequal and child marriages and recommended arrangement of marriages by consent of the parties concerned and their parents, nor did he favour marriage among persons close of kin. He appointed two officers for registration of marriages and instructed them to assure themselves that there was no infringement of the imperial regulations. But there is no mention of any sanction behind them. This suggests that the regulations represented only the pious wish of the Emperor which most people must have disregarded. Only government employees might have conformed to them and that too to a limited extent. The position of the lower class women was, as ever, comparatively good. They had economic independence and could stand on their own legs in case of neglect or desertion. They could marry another man after widowhood, desertion or serious estrangement.

Restrictions on interdining slackened during this period. Many sects came into existence which sought to abolish or liberalise caste. Dietary habits prevalent at court percolated to a certain extent to the masses as well. The groups or classes that had some direct contact with government were affected by these habits much more than the rest of the community. Ice, scents, rose water, meat and wine *etc.* were occasionally used even by the common people in those days.

During this period there was a large floating population of bastards as a result of illicit love and disregard of social regulations about marriage. Where women were numerically inferior, men did not always bother about the caste of the woman and

Mixed marriage

congratulated themselves on securing a woman of any class or community. This led to mixed marriages which were very common among the Jats and the Punjabis. They accepted even Muslim wives after a rough and ready method of purification. Many people owned slave-girls and concubines. This too swelled up the ranks of illegal children. In the coastal regions, Persians, Arabs, Portuguese and other Europeans often inter-married among the local people and thus created other groups of half-castes which led to the emergence of new castes although there were many sects which discouraged caste as a social institution.

In this period, the rural population did not remain as unaffected by life at court as it had been in the early medieval age. It is true that in this period the rulers

Rural Life

had no love lost for rural conditions of living. But as the government gained in strength and stability, its officers penetrated to the smallest town and even villages. Police outposts were established in rural areas. Tax-collectors, surveyors, and civil and armed police had now to go to the rural areas as a matter of routine. However, village and caste *panchayats* continued as ever and exercised the same influence as before.

Another important development of this period is the accentuation of difference between the rich and the poor. The rich

Accentuation of
difference between
the rich and the
poor

grew richer and more selfishly inclined in the use of their wealth. The poor got poorer and more helpless than ever. By the time of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb the load of taxes had become so heavy and the local officers so skilled in methods of extortion and corruption that they mutually added considerable difficulties to each other. Under Shahjahan the people secured some employment because of his ambitious building programme. This to an extent helped to alleviate their sufferings. But then if a few thousand labourers secured employment it could not have materially affected the condition of the people whose numbers ran into crores.

When kings and nobles, the high and the low were unmindful of improving the lot of the common man, the latter had no

Vaishnava preachers

alternative but to turn in desperation to God. If there had existed an effective middle class it might have forced reforms or engineered a revolution. But this too was missing. That is why the masses lent a willing ear to the teachings of the saints of the *Bhakti* school. They were divided into a number of sects, the most influential among whom were the Vaishnavas. The Vaishnava sects had come into existence in the early medieval age and during the period under review four sects among them exercised the greatest influence.

(1) *Sri Sampradaya of Ramanuja*, upholding *Vishishtadwaita* doctrines which prescribed worship of Lakshmi and Narayan

counted numerous votaries among the people of the north as well as the south. They had their monastic temples at different centres for propagating the teachings of their faith through learned renunciates and was more popular among the Brahmin intelligentsia.

(2) The followers of Chaitanya constituted the second influential group among the Vaishnavas. They laid emphasis on purity of emotions and sincerity of devotion. Ecstatic repetition of the Lord's name to the accompaniment of music and dancing was their characteristic form of adoration for the Divine. Jiva, Sanatan, Rup and many other Gaudiya Vaishnavas came to settle down in Braja—eternally associated with Krishna's *lilas* among men. They made strenuous efforts to propagate the teachings of Chaitanya whom they reverently called Gauranga Mahaprabhu (the fair-complexioned Deity). They composed numerous works in Sanskrit and Bengali and won a large following in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh.

(3) *Pushtimargis*—Another prominent school of Vaishnavism of this period consisted of the followers of Vallabhacharya. Vallabha's son Vitthalnath and grandson Gokulnath did much to popularise his views. This school laid great emphasis on idol-worship. The idol of Krishna was regarded as the living deity and worshipped with an all-engrossing devotion and reverence. The result was that the idol drove the deity out of court and usurped His place in the thought of the devotee. Among the followers of this school there were eight poets who are collectively known as the *Ashtachhap*. The most notable among them was the blind author of *Sursagar* known by his pseudonym Surdas. Mirabai of Rajasthan was also connected with this School. Devotional songs of Mirabai and Surdas acted as a balm on the bruised hearts of the people and hundreds of thousands of people forgot the day's troubles singing of the Lord at evening assemblies where songs of Mira and Surdas were recited. This brought them spiritual solace and inculcated a spirit of surrender to the will and Grace of God.

(4) The followers of Ramananda were the last important Vaishnava group of this period. They worshipped Rama, the son of Dashrath. The disciples of Ramananda founded a number of new sub-sects usually described as *Nirguniya*. Although these latter described God as *Nirguna* and *Niranjan*, they called him by the name of Rama as well probably in deference to their *Guru*. They composed devotional hymns in the language of the people which brought even the lowest castes within their ambit. Dadu, Malukdas and Shivadaya were some of the most noted saints of this group—each of whom became the founder of a new sect. The common ground among these saints was the emphasis on the doctrine of *Bhakti* and rejection of caste.

The higher classes among the Hindus did not feel much drawn towards these *Nirguniya* saints. They kept aloof from them probably on account of the preponderance of the lower classes among their followers and their rejection of caste prejudices. These higher castes found their apostle in another great Ramanāndi, perhaps the greatest of this and the succeeding age. He was Tulsidas, the author of numerous books on the life of Rama as a divine incarnation. The most popular among these is the *Ramacharit-manas* (The lake of the deeds of Rama) and the *Vinaya-Patrika* (an anthology of prayers addressed to Rama and to those in his proximity). The *Ramcharit-manas* of Tulsi has acquired the same esteem and popularity among the Hindus as the Bible among the Christians or the *Quran* among the Muslims.

These various groups and sects had one common factor and that was emphasis on sincere devotion as the best means of securing salvation from the miseries of this world. Their conception of *Bhakti* was not always the same but these subtle distinctions were only of sectarian interest and did not attract the notice of the masses in general who showed common reverence to them all and to their songs and other compositions.

The Vaishnavas rendered a great service in salvaging distressed and frustrated humanity by placing before them the ideal of sincere devotion and simple worship of a human God. They contributed to the cultural enrichment of the land by literary and philosophical compositions, developing and popularising music and construction of numerous imposing temples. But some of them preached doctrines of calamitous consequences.

Some of them preached that the only *Purusha* (Male) in the universe was Krishna. The rest were all *Prakritis* (Females). Hence they described themselves as Radharani or her lady-friends (*Sakahis*). This was therefore nicknamed *Sakhi Sampradaya* (the sect, each of whose members was a female companion of Radha and bound together with the rest in common love for Lord Krishna). The male followers of this sect dressed themselves as women, assumed female names and behaved like women. These so-called women and real women freely mixed together as members of a common spiritual sex. This led to great scandals and underground vice.

Similarly, some people stressed the value of love as a means of securing union with Krishna. They therefore tried to create conditions similar to those in which Krishna lived. They collected pseudo *gopis* (i.e. female followers) and acted as Krishna in *Ras* with them. Some recommended love making to washerwomen or other low-caste women for the practice of *Parkiya Prem* (Love outside marriage) which they believed had subsisted between Krishna and Radha. This too led to rank adultery.

Some people misused the philosophical conception of a true spiritual guide as a cover for vice and corruption. They were taught to equate the *Guru* with the Lord because it was through the *Guru's* guidance and benediction that the Grace of God could be secured. Hence they claimed that all that was due to God should first be offered to the *Guru*. One of the common Vaishnava doctrines was that of complete self-surrender *i.e.* offering himself heart, soul and body to the *Guru* and to renounce at his feet all of one's mundane possessions. Some of the scoundrellish saints claiming the body and affections of their female devotees turned great debauchees and ruined the peace and honour of many a credulous family.

Some saints lost their mental balance and sense of proportion because of intimate contact with court and courtiers. They bragged of using maunds of *Kasturi i.e.* musk and other costly things in preparing the ceremonial offering of food to the deity. The quality of the *prasad* (leavings of God) was measured by them in terms of its cost of production and its appeal to the palate and not the purity of devotion imbuing it. This over-emphasis on the value of money naturally led to vice and many heads of richly endowed monasteries started living in a royal style and suffered from the prevailing vices of royalty.

Kirtans often worked up the emotions and at times passions so much that it became difficult to remain sober or balanced. This too sometimes led to great abuses.

Some evil-minded base-born people deliberately distorted the conception of *Radhabhav* wherein the spiritual union of the individual soul with the Divine was likened to body and soul of a single entity, was now distorted into illicit love between man and woman regardless of its social consequences. Thus Krishna of their conception became the greatest voluptuary, and walking in his footsteps they became great debauchees themselves.

The muslim counterparts of Hindu devotees and saints were the Sufis. The nobler sort among them were ideal human beings who by the purity of their emotions, universality of love and nobility of their thoughts won the respect and affection of all those that came in contact with them. But there were black sheep among the Sufis too who began with human love as the road to the love divine. Their poetry admitted of a double meaning—the spiritual as well as carnal, which led to abuses. They patronised music and dancing as an aid to rapture and ecstasy.

The Sufis of this period generally adopted the doctrine of *Wahdat-ul-Wujud* (Unity of Being *i.e.* Monism) under the influence of Vedanta. This was, in a sense, contrary to orthodox Islam which taught *Abdiyat* or relationship of master and servant between Allah and the individual. The Sufis in general,

however, adopted the relationship of the lover and the beloved. The followers of the former school—Unity of Being—included Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gangoh (d. 1537), Mian Mir (1550-1635) of Lahore, Mulla Shah Badakhshi the spiritual preceptor of Dara, who under his guidance and inspiration wrote a number of works and sought to bridge the gulf between Hinduism and Islam and most of the saints of the *Chishtiya* and *Qadiriya* schools. But, the saints of the Naqshbandiya order stoutly opposed this doctrine and emphasized *Abdiyat* and *Wahdat-ul-Shuhud* (i.e. Apparentism). Among these latter the most important is Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi, the chief disciple of Khwaja Beqi Billah the founder of the *Naqshbandiya* school in India. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi's doctrines proved so effective in the revival of orthodox Islam that he has been called the *Mujaddid* (i.e. Renovator). Shah Waliullah (1702-1762) another great mystic of the Naqshbandi school tried to reconcile the doctrines of Unity of Being and Apparentism and claimed that he had been divinely appointed to perform this mission.

Many Sufis acquired great pre-eminence because of their association with the Mughal Emperors. Shaikh Salim Chishti was the favourite saint of Akbar because he believed that his blessings had protected the life of Prince Salim. Jahangir rejected the extravagant claims of the *Mujaddid* regarding his spiritual sovereignty over the world and imprisoned him at Gwalior for two years, but when he repented and promised to be loyal, set him free. Shahjahan is said to have been an admirer of Mian Mir while his son Dara found the company of Sarmad (variously described as the Unitarian and the anarchist) highly profitable. He was executed for his views in the reign of Aurangzeb who was a disciple of Khwaja Muhammad Masum the son of the *Mujaddid*. While posted in the Deccan as Viceroy, Aurangzeb had come in contact with Shaikh Abdul Latif and Shaikh Burhan of Burhanpur.

Among those who made a special effort to bring the Hindus and Muslims together, special mention deserves to be made of Abul Fazl, Dara and Mirza Janjanaan Mazhar (1699-1781); a Naqshbandiya saint who in one of his letters recognizes *Vedas* as Revealed Books and on that basis suggests that the Hindus were also *Ahl-i-Kitab*.

Besides these, older sects also continued. The *Shaktas* and the *Tantriks* lost their popularity because of Vaishnava influence but they never died out. The Shaivas were divided into numerous sects that counted among their votaries large numbers of people throughout the land from Kashmir to the extreme south. There were changes in their rituals but their philosophical position remained as unassailable as ever.

The Muslims also had a number of minor sects. One of these was the Mahadawi which came into much disrepute under Akbar for their interference in the life of the people and had therefore to face violent repression.

From point of view of national development, the most notable feature of the religious life of this period was the emergence of a spirit of fellow-feeling and mutual understanding between the Hindus and the Muslims. Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Dadu, Malukdas *etc.* accepted both the Hindus and the Muslims as their disciples and tried to bridge the gulf between the two communities. The Sufis did likewise. The religious policy of Akbar further strengthened the spirit of mutual cooperation and goodwill. He gave high offices to Hindus and Muslims like, participated in their festivals, brought about a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures and created conditions for the members of the two communities to act cheek by jowl in different walks of life. He incorporated some of the tenets of Hinduism in *Din-i-Ilahi* and allowed the Hindus full religious freedom. He had Hindu works on Philosophy, Mythology, Science and Literature translated into Persian, and entered into matrimonial alliances with the political leaders of the Hindus. All this had a wholesome effect. Under Jahangir, conditions remained practically the same. Shahjahan sounded a discordant note in the beginning but he steadied up later and the rapprochement between the Hindus and the Muslims continued to gain momentum. If recruitment of foreign amirs—most of whom were bigoted fanatics—had been stopped things might have gone on like this for long. But they constantly nursed separatist tendencies and obstructed ironing out of superficial differences. Aurangzeb by his policy of intolerance and religious persecution gave a rude shock to the happy development which had been going on for centuries. A great animus was created. Mosques and temples were destroyed when feelings ran high and rioting was widespread. This madness abated only when the Emperor died although his sons Akbar and Muazzam opposed it even in his own lifetime. In the eighteenth century affiliations were generally guided by political expediency and the rising power of the Marathas and the Rajputs rendered active persecution of the Hindus impossible. Thus the spirit of fellow-feeling among the two communities continued to develop even during this reign.

If the aims and objects of medieval religious reform movements are critically examined in the light of their principles, practices, rituals and consequences, it would appear that there is no unimpeachable evidence to vouchsafe their success in realization of their aims. On the other hand, there are numerous symptoms pointing to the contrary. What was this due to? These and earlier

movements had started with the avowed aim of putting an end to pain and suffering in life by securing eternal peace and beatitude. It was preached that this could be secured by release from the chain of birth and death on realisation of one's identity with the Divine, or attainment of a state of Supreme Bliss untainted by misery or rising to a state of consciousness which transcend both pain and pleasure. But the proof and security of its realization they said could be found only after death. On the mundane plane, they set before themselves the ideal of social purification and inculcation of ideal human virtues. But speaking collectively, human life show signs of progressive moral degeneration rather than of progress. The evil in man appears to get more blatant and unconcealed. The vices that one seeks to conceal are boasted of as a matter of pride. Jealousy, envy, insincerity, unscrupulous greed and selfishness, sensuality and meanness which was noticed in the 18th century has got worse today. The common problem posed before all thoughtful people was the sudden and growing fall in human standards. The Hindu believed that it was the effect of the advent of the *Kali* age after the passing away of *Satyug*, *Treta* and *Dwapar*. The Muslims believe this to be the inevitable road to the Day of Judgment when God and his prophets would bring final and enduring deliverance from sin and suffering. This meant that both the Hindus and the Muslims recognized the inadequacy of their religious teachers to reduce evil progressively. The Gita says that the Lord incarnates himself age after age for the protection of the good and the chastisement of the wicked. This suggests that there is no conception of the coming of such a powerful Divine Being who might destroy evil root and branch so that God may not have to engage himself in the same dirty business again and again.

The conclusion that becomes irresistible from the above discussion is that the picture of ideal life so far drawn and the means prescribed for its realization had some fundamental error or else man would not have progressively deteriorated despite the efforts of saints and philosophers, prophet and incarnations of God.

Wherein does this error lie? A comparative review of the history of all religions reveals the fact that the renouncing of the life of the householder and foundation of monastic orders has invariably led sooner or later to growth of sin and vice and that the ties of the family are never really shaken. The so-called renunciates give up the family of their birth to build up another equally or more strong in its attachments. When man's birth and upbringing is possible only in family, wherein lies the wisdom in pretending to forsake it? If there be an intelligent being behind the cosmos, it has to be admitted that he considers the life of the householder as most suited to his all-round deve-

elopment or else he would not have sent him into a family from the very beginning. Hence those who forsake the family but fail to rise above the shackles of family life in respect of food and shelter devise new methods of satisfying their wants and are unable to rise above jealousy, greed, anger and lust, are really unworthy deserters from duty.

The first fundamental error, therefore, is the rejection of the family in favour of a supposed renunciation. But this too is clear that the family as at present constituted or as it existed in the past is not calculated to promote real happiness and progress or else the sheer weight of numbers of householders would have forced our progress higher and higher. The family was to be used not as a means for satisfying carnal desires but for a life of reasoned restraint, a place of *sadhana* and not of indulgence. For a happy and balanced life, banishment of disease, death and old age is necessary. As a good householder, therefore, man should have devoted himself to discovering the process of conquest over age, disease and death.

Instead of doing this, it was suggested that the aim of being born in a body could be secured only by permanently destroying this connection. Instead of trying to preserve life eternally, the desire to destroy it irrevocably was another grave error of the preachers of the past.

If man did not know how to do it, he should have sought guidance from a competent *Guru*. If such a *Guru* as could show the path of physical immortality was not available, no attempt should have been made to pose as the *Guru*. Instead, he should have engaged in constant and earnest prayer from the innermost depths of his being for the emergence of such a teacher. When man, on the other hand, persuaded himself to believe that he was the prophet, the incarnation or son of God, he assumed a responsibility unequal to his capacity even though his action might have been based on sincere conviction. This has done humanity great harm. Man should have engaged himself in praying for the appearance of a true world-redeemer who could give permanent relief from pain and death by showing the path of establishing immortality on earth. It is because of these fundamental shortcomings that the work of these religious teachers failed to do real good to humanity.

CHAPTER XXVII

ECONOMIC LIFE

From an economic point of view, Indian society may be divided into nine classes. In descending order of incomes, the highest class comprised the Rajput Rajas and the higher *mansabdars* of the Mughal Empire.

Economic Groups The second group consisted of second grade officers of the Mughal army and the Imperial Government. Next to them were third grade officers including soldiers of different categories (except the *Ahadis* who fall under the second group), peons, newscarrriers, watchmen, sweepers, watermen and syces. Physicians and teachers occupied position intermediate between the second and third grade government employees. Then there was the business community which included men of different income groups. Some were so rich that they owned as many as 100 ships and lived in great magnificence and style. At the other extreme were petty shop-keepers who earned just enough to keep body and soul together. In between were the big merchants of larger towns who had an enormous income though not comparable to that of business magnates engaged in foreign trade. The businessmen within the Mughal Empire lived a simple life lest their wealth might excite the envy of a rapacious local officer. Another important group consisted of artisans and craftsmen. This included men of a number of categories, such as those employed in manufacturing gold ornaments of great beauty and delicacy; skilled craftsmen who worked on quality wood, sandal-wood, and ivory as cutters, designers and engravers; Embroiderers of silks and velvets too fell in the same category. The engineers and stone-cutters engaged in first grade *pietra dura* work must have received good salaries. Ordinary carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, cobblers, common artisans, stone-cutters, dyers and weavers *etc.* had incomes proportionate to the quality of their work and the market price of their handicrafts. Then there were common labourers who worked on daily or monthly wages. They were the worst-paid people in the country. Lastly, there were peasants who were the most numerous but who were denied all privilege in the business of government.

For proper evaluation of economic life of the people, a reference must be made to currency, weights and measures used.

Weights and coins In the *Ain-i-Akbari*, prices, salaries and taxes have been given in dams. Other coins commonly referred to are the silver rupee

and the gold *mohar*. The silver rupee was started by Sher Shah but Akbar introduced many new features in it. 40 *dams* were equal to one rupee and 10 rupees were computed as equal to a gold *mohar*, executed both in the circular and rectangular forms. The round one was called *Ilahi* while the rectangular one was called *Lal Jalali*. Besides these, there were many other coins of lower and higher face values but they were not in common use. In this connection, a special mention may be made of just two issues. One was called a *Sahansa* which weighed more than 100 tolas and which was equal to 100 *mohars* or 1000 rupees in value. The other was the *jital*; the smallest coin and was equal to $1/25$ of a *dam* or $1/1000$ of rupee.

In regard to weights there is reference to *ratti*, *masha*, *tola*, *seer* and *maund*. Although in those days too a maund was equal to 40 current seers, in modern terms it weighed only 27 seers, that is to say that the medieval seer and the maund was equal to $27/40$ of the present day seer and maund.

The most important people in the Mughal empire were the higher *mansabdars* called *Umrahs* or *Umdas*. Their monthly income was very high. The salary of a *pan-jhazari* in the reign of Akbar was 28,000 to 30,000 rupees per month. The maximum cost of maintaining a full complement of elephants, horses, camels, mules, carts *etc.* was about Rs. 10,000/-, so that his net monthly income was Rs. 18000/- to Rs. 20,000/-. He did not have to spend anything out of this amount on his contingent because there is a specific mention that in fixing his *jagir* the salary payable to his contingent was also calculated and included. He was the disbursing authority but he had to share no burdens himself. His salary was thus 3000 times as great as that of a common cavalry trooper who received Rs. 6/- for himself and Rs. 6/- for his horse and 6000 times that of an infantryman. This may serve as an index of difference in income of the rich and the poor. Those who were paid in *jagir* which practice became almost universal under Akbar's successors, might have earned even more. Those who were guilty of keeping the contingents for shorter terms than the prescribed one or who maintained a smaller contingent or paid it less than was officially prescribed made still more gains. That is why they could live in a right royal style and maintain large personal armies, as for instance the artillery under Mir Jumla. They were generally steeped in luxury and extravagance and utilized all possible ways of squandering away their wealth specially after the law of escheats came into force. This meant that their superfluous wealth was not employed in productive ways for developing trade and industry. The only redeeming feature was that the money of the tax-payer put into their hands gradually slipped into the pockets of another section of the population, by no means affluent, for they all main-

tained a troop of dancing girls, slaves, musicians, skilled labourers and craftsmen to minister to their luxurious habits. Thus the higher nobles, with notable exceptions like Asaf Khan, kept the money in circulation by passing on to another group what they received from the peasant or the tax-payer in general.

If among second grade officers were included the *mansabdars* of 50 to 500 under Akbar and 80 to 800 under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, then their salaries also appear considerable and they could easily live in fair comfort. They would suffer from want or inconvenience only if they aped the manners of their superiors. Their salary would be 10 to 100 times more than that of a common soldier. A part of their income, of course, was passed on to other indigenous elements but a major part of it was utilised on the maintenance of their own kith and kin. The statement given below shows a comparative study of salaries under the Great Mughals.

MONTHLY SALARY IN RUPEES

Serial No.	Rank	Under Akbar.	Under Shahjahan.	Under Aurangzeb.	Remarks.
1.	10	100	—	—	Salary under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb has been calculated to the nearest rupee.
2.	20	135	84 ¹	84 ¹	1. Less than that of (1) under Akbar.
3.	50	250	—	—	
4.	80	410	290 ²	290 ²	2. Almost equal to (3) under Akbar.
5.	100	700	410	410	
6.	300	1400	833	833	
7.	400	2000	1040	1040	
8.	500	2500	1666	1666	
9.	800	5000	2625 ³	2600 ³	3. Almost equal to (8) under Akbar.
10.	1000	8200	4111	4111	
11.	2000	12000	8333 ⁴	8333 ⁴	4. Equal to that of <i>Hazari</i> under Akbar
12.	3000	17000	12500	12500	
13.	4000	22000	16666	16666	
14.	5000	30000	20833	20833	
15.	7000	46666	29111 ⁵	29111 ⁵	5. Less than that of a <i>panj-hazari</i> under Akbar.

Unlike the first two categories of government employees, the lower grade staff found it difficult to eke out an honourable existence within the salaries allowed to them. The Lower grade government servant difficulties of common soldiers increased still further when they did not get their salaries in full and with regularity. Those who were attached to government offices, the royal household or the Revenue Department were able to secure some tips. The syces made some saving by giving shorter rations to the animals under their charge. Mahawats got a special allowance for staging elephant fights. But these were such risky engagements that the members of their families took leave of them with loud lamentations as if they were sending them into the very jaws of death. But they could ill afford to displease their masters and had to risk their life to provide them entertainment.

The teaching community of this period can be divided into four classes. The lowest paid teachers were the maulvis and Pandits who were attached to a mosque or a temple and imparted elementary education to the children of the locality during their leisure hours. They could not expect any regular payment from the peasants because they had little to spare for the luxury of education and the state gave no grants-in-aid to these primary schools. The Maulvi drew a small salary as the *Imam* of the mosque which was just enough for his maintenance. Similarly, the Brahmin priest attached to a temple got a regular salary from the local zamindar or businessman. Their wards brought them occasional gifts of the produce of their fields. Thus the salary of these teachers was equal to or less than that of primary school teachers today but they commanded far greater respect and influence in society.

The next group of teachers consisted of those learned Brahmins who resided at Kashi, Srinagar, Hardwar, Prayag, Gaya, Navadwipa, Puri, Sringeri, Kanchi *etc.* and gave discourses on the *Vedas*, Scriptures, *Puranas*, Astronomy, Grammar, Literature, Medicine *etc.* in the *Pathshalas* established there. Some of them were profound scholars and commanded great esteem in society. They drew pupils from the far corners of the land and respect for these teachers varied in direct proportion to their learning and powers of exposition. They did not earn enough to grow rich. But they were certainly above want. Most of them shunned the very idea of amassing riches for they were firmly convinced that the Goddess of Prosperity did not shower her favours on the votaries of learning.

The third group consisted of Muslim theologians most of whom were attached to *Maktabs* and *Madrasas* and received grants from the state. Some of these even received 500 bighas of

land but it was later reduced. This group included some extremely learned people but their besetting sin was lack of breadth of vision and nothing gladdened their hearts so much as the sufferings of the persecuted infidels. They commanded great respect among the orthodox Muslims but in comparison to the Brahmin pandits they appear inferior for they had neither the latter's nobility of character and moral restraint nor their breadth of vision or lack of greed.

The fourth group consisted of teachers attached to the royal court. Their income was generally higher than that of all the above categories. They had greater opportunities of relishing the pleasures of life. But those who were really good had a very unenviable position. The king or the nobleman who employed them looked upon them as his servants. The princes too regarded them as servants and often did as pleased their fancy. Hence self-respecting men could not stand the ordeal for long. They were the richest but the least respected by their pupils and their parents.

The Physicians may be divided into two groups—those attached to the court and private practitioners. The latter usually did not have a large income. But those who were attached to court or noble families had much better emoluments. Foreign physicians and surgeons were also invited and shown great consideration because of their distinctive ability in certain matters in which the native physicians were deficient. Among the royal *Hakims* the most distinguished were Hakim Dumam, Hakim Daud, Hakim Alimuddin, Hakim Hassu and Hakim Sudra. The most reputed *Vaidyas* at the court were Chandrasen and Bhimnath. The income of these persons can be imagined from the fact that Hassu, Daud and Alimuddin each held the *mansab* of 5000 under Jahangir and Shahjahan.

There were some professional lawyers and government advocates too. But we have no reliable information about their income.

Accounts of foreign travellers tell us that a number of important towns existed along the main high-ways and rivers.

While referring to the local administration, Trade and Industry we have already noticed that every sarkar had at least one important town which formed its headquarters. The pargana offices were similarly located in smaller towns. This means that during this period there was considerable growth in the number, prosperity and size of towns. This directly or indirectly promoted the growth of trade and industry. The more important industries are considered here in brief.

Bengal, Gujerat and the Punjab had specialised in the art of refining *gur* for manufacturing sugar and sugar candy.

Sugar and Sugar Candy Of these three preparations, candy sold the dearest as it does even now. In the time of Akbar sugar candy sold at 5 seers for a rupee.

Hence only the rich could use it freely but for others it was of medicinal use only.

Bihar and Malwa produced most of the opium manufactured in this country. It was used both as an intoxicant and as a medicine. It had a large and profitable export trade as well. It is remarkable that when Aurangzeb enforced prohibition, he made an exception in favour of opium.

The greatest centre of indigo plantation was Bayana. It was prepared both for home consumption and for the foreign market.

The potter and the carpenter plied cottage industries which did not require much investment. Their products were everywhere in great demand but they did not always have sufficient leisure and skill to make them pieces of art. Delhi, Kashi and Chunar produced fine earthen-wares of much artistic value. Earthen toys were also manufactured and sometimes evinced great skill in painting and expression. But these did not have a good market.

The carpenters were divided into two broad divisions of skilled and semi-skilled workers. The latter manufactured among other things agricultural accessories, bullock-carts, boats, cots, boxes, bed-steads and doors, frames, beams, pillars *etc.* used in buildings.

Most of their products were rough and crude, just good enough to serve their main purpose without any pretensions to artistic beauty, or delicacy of design. But the wants of the court and higher classes were satisfied by expert carpenters. The royal *Karkhanas* contained some excellent workers on wood. They produced fine boxes, artistic beds, beautiful light vehicles and excellent boats. In one of the woodcuts Jahangir and Nurjahan are shown riding a bullock-cart in which Jahangir himself is acting as the driver. In Kashmir and Carnatic, articles of great beauty and art were produced. European travellers bear testimony to India possessing many excellent shipyards for manufacturing commercial craft and speak highly of the quality of Indian timber. These shipyards produced strong boats of various sizes the largest of which carried a cargo of one to six thousand maunds. The ships that carried *Haj* pilgrims were sometimes so big that they had a capacity of 30,000 maunds. These were all river-craft for coastal traffic. India was very deficient during this period in manufacturing warships and seaworthy vessels.

The Iron industry was fairly advanced. Indian blacksmiths manufactured civilian goods as well as armaments. They were very proficient in manufacturing good swords and daggers, spears and axes. But they were not so well skilled in the manufacture of guns and match-locks. The im-

perial arsenals did not produce artillery as good as the Persians, Turks or Europeans did. The Mughal Emperors did not pay such attention to this industry as to bring it on par with that of foreigners by deputing intelligent engineers to acquire training abroad, nor did they invite foreign experts to run some of their imperial arsenals in India on more progressive lines. They did not also pay special attention to producing heavy machinery. Although iron goods were greatly in demand everywhere from the hut of the peasant to the royal palace, the superior smithies were located in the urban rather than in the rural areas. As coal had not yet been mined, fine steel was often imported and because of the absence of adequate fuel the furnaces could not be kept going.

Some people were engaged in manufacturing metal goods of brass, copper, bronze *etc.* Delhi and its environs produced the best copper goods although the industry was fairly widespread. Benares specialised in brass-ware while Bengal produced fine domestic utensils of a variety of bronze. The Hindus generally used metallic utensils while the Muslims preferred earthenware and china. The higher classes used fancy metal goods and porcelain, the latter being imported from abroad.

Gold and silver articles, both simple and bejewelled were sufficiently in demand at the royal court among the nobility, the richer businessmen, and heads of temples and monasteries. Many skilled labourers were engaged in this trade and were usually paid handsomely. But Indian jewellers catered mostly to domestic needs only. Similarly luxury goods made of pearls, ivory, coral, horn and sandal-wood were also manufactured.

Intoxicants were greatly in demand those days. Quite a number of people were therefore engaged in the sale and manufacture of wine and toddy. The quality of Indian wines was not very superior while in the manufacture of lower quality, molasses and *mahua* fruit was used. Grape-wines of superior quality were imported from Persia and Europe.

The Leather Industry in India was not in a thriving state. Only members of richer families used shoes and sandals. Saddles were generally prepared without the use of leather. Waterbags for *bhishtis* and *pans* (leathern buckets) for purposes of irrigation were in fair demand. Leather was also used for various other little things and the industry provided employment to thousands of people in different provinces.

Cloth industry was perhaps the most thriving industry of this period. Raw materials generally used by the cloth industry

in India were cotton, silk, wool and hemp. Silk was grown in Bengal and Kashmir and was also imported from China. The Indian silk manufactures catered to the needs of the higher as well as the middle classes. The Emperor generally manufactured his requirements in his own *Karkhanas* which were located at Lahore, Agra, Dacca and Ahmedabad.

The raw silk produced in Bengal was largely used up by local weavers. The surplus was diverted to up country and Gujerat. Gujerat was the producer of the best silken goods of this period. Abul Fazl says that the Emperor manufactured such excellent silken goods with the assistance of foreign experts employed by him that they could successfully compete with foreign imports. Bengal produced a variety of cloth, very much like the silks out of a local fibre perhaps of a hemppen family. Kashmir specialised in gorgeous silks, done in different colours and designs. Foreign imports were also in demand, a proof of the fact that the industry had not reached its full scope of development. Gold and silver embroidery was used as an aid to improving the quality of silken goods. These were usually meant for the nobility and the richer classes.

The Woollen industry in India was confined to the hilly tracts of the Punjab, Kashmir and the Kumaon region. Coarse rugs sold at the rate of four for a rupee. Fine *shawls* were manufactured in Lahore and Kashmir. Abul Fazl says that the Emperor had established 1000 *Karkhanas* at Lahore. The industry does not appear to have fully prospered because of lack of excellent and adequate raw-material. Foreign travellers make repeated reference to the high skill of Indian craftsmen who could produce a perfect imitation of any foreign import without any difficulty. Carpets were prepared to suit various tastes and pockets. Agra produced the finest carpets in India but they were inferior to those imported from Persia which remained greatly in demand throughout this period.

The Cotton industry stood on a different plane altogether. The cotton industry in India at this time was in a very flourishing and advanced state. Sonargaon in Bengal; Mau, Benares and Agra in Uttar Pradesh; Lahore, Multan, Sukkur and Thatta in Sindh and the Punjab; Ahmedabad, Patan, Baroda, Broach and Surat in Gujerat; Burhanpur in Khandesh and Golkunda in the Deccan were the principal centres of this industry. Fine muslins produced in Bengal were famed for the fineness of their texture all over India. It had a foreign market as well. But the Indian chints and calicoes were in much greater demand in foreign lands. From China and Japan in the east to Persia,

Arabia, Egypt and other parts of Africa in the West cotton goods of India were everywhere in demand. Foreign traders were ever anxious to secure Indian cotton cloth. European trading companies in India carried Indian products to Europe. But when there was an agitation against import of Indian cloth in England as her own production gradually improved in quality and cost owing to the Industrial Revolution and because of the great anarchy and lawlessness in India, the British East India Company systematically destroyed the cotton industry of this land.

People engaged in different industries usually worked at home with machines and implements owned by them and supported themselves by the sale of goods produced. It is difficult to form a correct estimate of their incomes. Contemporary

Income of craftsmen

accounts leave the impression that before the time of Akbar people engaged in these cottage industries were subjected to a tax. But Akbar in his benevolence abolished these taxes because he felt that the industry could not support the weight of taxes. It may be inferred from this that their net profits were just enough to pay for their maintenance. Local officers may have tried to revive these taxes after the death of Akbar or even in his own life-time in disregard of his instructions. Besides, these craftsmen had no unions of their own to sell their goods direct to the consumer, on the other hand, they had to sell them to businessmen who acted as a link between them and the consumers by purchasing the products of the craftsmen for sale to the prospective buyers. These businessmen were capitalist and drove hard bargains with the producer leaving him with very little margin of profit. If the producer was in financial distress they exploited him still more. The factory labour engaged in royal *karkhanas* on a monthly salary could have been slightly better off. Industrial producers in the rural areas catering to the needs of the rural population could sell their products direct to the consumers and secure a better price. But when the demand was poor they were obliged to sell their goods even at a loss. In short, neither the rural nor the urban craftsman had any substantial savings to face famines or other unforeseen calamities which generally took a heavy toll of them when they occurred.

There were many craftsmen who had to earn their living by hiring their labour for wages. These included artisans, masons, stone-cutters, gardeners *etc.* Then

Labour

there were many carpenters, black-smiths, goldsmiths *etc.* who too had to work on wages.

We have no definite knowledge of daily or monthly wages of these different categories. The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the following rates in respect of some of them :

Ordinary labour	2 dams a day
Skilled labour	3-4 " "
Carpenters	3-7 " "
Masons	5-7 " "

Labour employed on monthly basis was generally available at Rs. 31/- per month. This suggests that the wage index was fairly low in those days. But in normal times even this poor wage was sufficient to pay for their expenses because the prices of essential commodities were also low. A schedule of prices in the reign of Akbar is appended below :

Commodity	Weight	Price	In terms of modern weights and currency.	
Wheat	1 md	12 dams	2 mds. 10 srs	per rupee
Kabul gram	"	16 "	1 md. 27½	" "
Barley	"	8 "	3 mds. 15	" "
Sukhdas rice (Paddy)	"	100 "	11	" "
Sathi rice paddy	"	20 "	1 mds. 14	" "
Mung	"	18 "	1 md. 20	" "
Jwar	"	10 "	2 mds. 28	" "
Onion	"	6 "	4 "	20 " "
Garlic	"	40 "	—	27 " "
Ginger	1 seer	2½ "	11	" "
Chaulai	"	¼ "	2 mds. 28	" "
Afghan sheep	1	1¼ - 2 Rs.		
Goats (I grade)	1	1 rupee		
Mutton	1 md.	54 dams	20 srs.	" "
Ghee	1 md.	105 "	10½	" "
Oil	1 "	80 "	13½	" "
Milk	"	25 "	1 md. 3 srs	" "
Curd	"	18 "	1 md. 20	" "
Candy	1 seer	5½ "	5	" "

Large towns had big markets where all the necessities of life as well as luxury goods were freely available. People engaged in this trade were often very rich. But they usually kept their wealth concealed underground and lived in a simple and unpretentious manner. They charged fabulous prices for rare cosmetics and luxury goods as they had to labour under handicaps. Although the Emperor had abolished local cesses, they had generally to pay rahdari and pandari. The roads were often infested with dacoits which local officers were charged to keep safe and protect for traders and travellers passing through. For this a special constabulary was maintained which was generally permitted to levy a toll to meet the cost of its establishment. They

would sometimes demand a toll at 10% *ad valorem* and not only that, they seized whatever wares as pleased them and paid for them a price arbitrarily fixed by themselves. Thus these so-called protectors were the first great enemies of the business community. Then, when the trader had to pass through jungles or other unusually unsafe regions he had to hire special guards for his protection. Thirdly, they had to sell their goods on credit not only to the higher *mansabdars* but also to other government employees and it was not always easy to secure payment from them. Thus although the margin of their profits was high they were not assured of a steady income and had sometimes to face serious sudden losses. But despite these handicaps, most of them were able to collect private underground hoards.

Merchants in ports and coastal towns lived in great style because their position was comparatively secure. Some of them were extremely wealthy. Virji Bohra a merchant of Surat was considered to be the richest man in the world. Abdul Ghafur's personal business was equal to that of the British East India Company. Besides these, there were foreign traders in the coastal regions. Chief among them were the Persians, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and the English. Merchants from China and Japan too occasionally came here. The coastal trade of India was almost wholly in the hands of Indian merchants. But it was in the overseas trade that there was great competition. As long as the coastal regions were safe for navigation, Indian traders from Sindh, Gujerat and Cambay went to Persia, Arabia, Egypt and Turkey while quite a proportion of the foreign trade was carried on by the land-route passing through Qandahar. After the coming of the Portuguese they acquired the monopoly of trade with Europe. A little later, the Dutch challenged their supremacy in Indian waters and established their own effective monopoly over the trade of the Eastern archipelago. Finally by 1763, the British eliminated all European rivals and established their supremacy over the Indian waters and gradually over the mainland as well. Thus the Indian rulers did not pay proper attention to overseas trade and development of naval power. Individual traders could have done this only if they were assured of support and protection from the government of the day against their foreign rivals and enemies. But in the absence of such facilities, foreign traders found it easy to implant their feet firmly on the Indian soil.

Usually, the foreign trader met with no local opposition as long as he was engaged in trade alone. They were on the other hand often welcomed because they brought things which were very much in demand here. The imports among metals included gold, silver, copper, lead and steel. Out of these, gold and silver

Foreign trade

were particularly in demand because local supplies were almost negligible. France exported fine woollens while silks were imported from Italy, Persia and Transoxiana. Persian carpets were also in demand. China was the main supplier of raw silk. Horse-breeding was carried on in India and every effort was made to improve and maintain their quality but quality horses were also imported to meet the demand. Horse-dealers came to India both by land and sea. Mules too were imported and the best among them cost as much as Rs. 1,000/-. Other imports included fresh and dry fruits, wines, slaves, musk, porcelain, war ammunition, cosmetics, fancy goods *etc.*

The exports from this land included printed cloth, calicoes and muslin among cotton goods. Gujerat exported silks as well. Pepper, pearls, artistic jewellery, fancy goods, opium, indigo, sugar, sugar candy and some raw silk from Bengal were the other principal exports. The income from customs under Aurangzeb amounted to only 30 lakhs of rupees. From this one may conclude that the volume of foreign trade in proportion to the population of the land was inadequate.

As compared to this the income from land was too great and amounted to 110 times that of the customs. The Indian peasant led a simple and frugal life, worked hard at his fields and was on the whole contented with his lot. They did not always have adequate food and clothing but want and penury had become so habitual with them that if they got a full meal even of the coarser variety, they felt quite happy and satisfied. The peasants had to contend against three principal adversaries : (1) Officers of the revenue department, (2) Natural calamities and (3) wild beasts.

Extortions and oppressions of the government agents have been referred to in an earlier chapter. The depredations of wild animals were in those days much greater than today because the Himalayan tarai was covered with forests which extended far towards the south and there were many regions which have now been cleared for agriculture but which in those days had dense forests whose denizens included the rhino, wild buffalo, wild boar, deer, elephants, nilgaos *etc.* The peasant suffered heavily because of them. Nor did he have the freedom to clear the jungle and kill the wild beasts because there were many government forests specially preserved to provide the pastime of hunting to the ruler of the land and the peasant had no right to trespass their limits or to attack the wild life within them. Thus next to the royal officers, the wild animals under special imperial protection constituted a great and constant danger to his crops. Thirdly, nature too was not always in his favour. Floods, heavy or scanty or untimely rains often led to famines or semi-famine conditions. As means of communication were slow

and the peasant had no saving for the lean year, he suffered enormously on such occasions and whole tracts of land became desolate in no time while people died in thousands and lakhs.

During this period, numerous famines took place. The first famine in the reign of Akbar took place in 1555-1556. Delhi became a desolate tract and thousands of people lost their lives. Badaoni says that he himself had witnessed scenes of cannibalism and it was a great torment to see people dying for want of food in the most distressing circumstances.

In 1573-74 there was a famine in Gujerat. It was followed by an epidemic. This caused great sufferings to the rich and poor alike.

Between 1595-1598, scanty rainfall caused wide-spread suffering, and according to one historian roads were covered with corpses without anybody to attend to them. This time famine was followed by cholera. They together accounted for thousands of lives within a short time.

In the reign of Jahangir, plague and influenza broke out. Gujerat was in the grip of both these diseases. In northern India plague continued to rage from 1616 to 1624 and lakhs of people died of it because in Agra alone, according to a report, hundreds of people died every day. The Emperor tried to alleviate popular suffering but the contemporary physicians could not discover any anti-dote to cure it and plague continues to be a terror even to the present day.

In the reign of Shahjahan, there was a famine in 1630-1631 which affected Golkunda and Ahmadnagar in the south and Malwa and Gujerat in the north. Abdul Hamid Lahori says that people were prepared to stake their lives for a mere loaf of bread but there was none to offer the loaf. Popular suffering went to such lengths that they started eating whatever they could lay their hands on. They began with dogs, went next to domestic animals and finally ravenous hunger of the parents threatened the security even of their children.

There were similar famines in Kashmir (1641) and the Punjab (1646).

In the reign of Aurangzeb, there were famines in 1659, 1670-1671, 1682 and 1702-1704. But they did not prove as dreadful as those in the reigns of his predecessors.

All the rulers tried to alleviate the suffering of famine-stricken people. Corn was rapidly rushed in from other provinces, the state arranged for free distribution of food and granted full remissions in taxes. In 1659, Aurangzeb even abolished *Rahdari* and *Pandari* cesses to induce the grain-dealers to bring large stocks to the affected area from other regions. Relief was provided by initiating construction of roads, canals and build-

ings. But government aid usually reached the affected region late and after thousands of people had died of hunger. In a way this was entirely the fault of the state. The taxes were so heavy that the peasant was utterly unfit to face famines. The same was true of the craftsman and the wage-earning labourer. The state did not take precautionary measures against sudden calamities and in the absence of railways and other quick methods of transport, help could not always be rushed in time. That is why at the time of each important famine, cases of cannibalism were reported and indiscriminate eating of all that came one's way led to epidemics.

The state was guilty of certain grave errors of omission and commission. It kept the taxes high, paid low salaries to its inferior staff and weakened the economic structure of the state by squandering away the hard-earned money of the peasant over idle fancies and vain pretensions. It did not pay adequate attention to improving means of communications. In its anxiety to extend the empire to its widest limits, it did not take due precautions to strengthen internal organisation by basing it on a sound fiscal policy. It neglected foreign trade, naval armament and due encouragement of industry. Nor did it realize its responsibility in regard to establishing new industries and nursing them to strength and vitality. Foreigners had established their printing presses in India, but neither the Timurid Emperors nor the Maratha nor the Rajput rulers pay any heed to establish printing presses or paper mills. This handicapped extension of popular education. It would not therefore be wrong to assert that the state neither made a satisfactory arrangement for feeding and clothing its citizens nor did it provide adequate means for their intellectual development. The economic and cultural advancement of the people was due not to the benevolence of the state but in spite of its neglect and exploitation. The splendour and magnificence of court life could ill-conceal the miseries of suffering humanity, the alleviation of whose lot did not seem to be their concern.

Mistakes of the
government

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ART AND LITERATURE

During the two hundred and fifty odd years whose account has been furnished in the foregoing pages the country registered considerable progress in many directions. But perhaps the record of literary and artistic achievements is the most glorious of all. The versatile genius of India furnished such excellent specimens of architecture, painting, book-craft, music and literature that they command respect and admiration to this day and have won for India a place of pride in the cultural history of the world. For a proper evaluation of these the thoughtful reader is advised to know them at first-hand and to follow their excellences in the writings of competent authority. He would then appreciate the great treasure that medieval Indians with all their faults and failings have left behind. Here an attempt is only made to help him pick up a preliminary acquaintance with them.

It has been noticed earlier that the Timurid Emperors of India were great admirers of Persian culture. They made Persian their court-language and helped in the enrichment of its literature by new compositions prepared under their inspiration and patronage. The literary output in Persian during this period may be classified under five heads : (i) Translations (ii) Poetry, (iii) History, (iv) Letters and autobiographies and (v) other prose work.

The practice of having classics of foreign literature translated for the benefit of Muslims dates back to the time of the Caliphate. Firuz Tughluq had taken some steps in this direction. But among Indian rulers, Akbar made the richest contribution in this regard. He organised a Translation Department and entrusted it the task of translating Sanskrit, Arabic and European masterpieces into Persian. Among Sanskrit works, *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Lilawati*, *Atharvaveda* and *Rajtarangini* were the principal books selected. The *Mahabharata* was translated by the joint efforts of Naqib Khan, Badaoni, Sultan Haji Thaneshwari, Mulla Sheri, Faizi and Abul Fazl. It was entitled *Razm-namah* and was copied by expert calligraphists and illustrated by fine paintings specially prepared for this by court-painters. Badaoni translated the *Ramayana* also. He began the translation

of *Atharvaveda* too but gave it up when he found the task too difficult and left it to be completed by Haji Ibrahim Sarhindi. *Lilawati* was translated by Faizi and a work on Astrology by Mukammal Khan Gujerati. *Rajtarangini* was translated by Maulana Shah Muhammad Shahabadi. *Kaliyadaman* was translated by Abul Fazl who called it *Ayar Danish*. Similarly Faizi took up *Nal Damyanti* and rendered it into Persian under the title *Nal-Daman*. Maulana Sheri translated *Harivansha*.

Next after Akbar the work was taken up by Prince Dara in the reign of Shahjahan. He employed a number of Brahmin pandits to assist him in the work of translation and by hard and persistent labour ultimately succeeded in completing the translation of 50 *Upanishads*, *Bhagwadgita* and *Yoga-Vashishtha*. When these works became available in Persian, the Muslims got an opportunity to acquaint themselves with Indian Philosophy and sciences and the more thoughtful among them acquired respect for Hindus and Hinduism.

Arabic, Turkish and Greek works were also translated. The autobiography of Babar was translated by Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan while Badaoni translated a portion of the *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*. The Bible was also translated. A number of commentaries on the *Quran* were rendered into Persian and under Shahjahan and Aurangzeb works of theology and jurisprudence were translated. Aurangzeb secured compilation of *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri* on the basis of many standard works in Arabic.

Although some Persian poetry was being constantly produced and Emperor Humayun himself did some versifying, the heyday of Persian poetry under the Timurids began with Akbar.

Poetry

During his reign Faizi, Ghizali and Urfi composed *qasidas*, *rubais*, *masnavis* and *ghazals* of great literary merit. There were, besides, many lesser lights. Abul Fazl mentions a total of 59 poets who came to Akbar's court. According to Badaoni, Urfi's poems were liked in all quarters while Faizi who held the title of *Malik-us-shuara* (king of poets) and who received high praise at the hands of Abul Fazl was not so popular. Jahangir and Nurjahan too did some versifying and loved the company of poets. In the reign of Shahjahan, there was really no great poet and those who succeeded in composing *qasidas* flattering to the emperor secured temporary pre-eminence. Jahanara was interested in literary pursuits while Aurangzeb's daughter Zeb-un-nissa composed some poetry. The subject-matter of Persian poetry was love and most of the poets used hackneyed phrases and images to express it. They have no pretensions to originality, realism or depth of emotion.

Special attention was paid during this period to historiography. A mere enumeration of all the historical works pro-

duced during this period will occupy a lot of space and serve no useful purpose. The most outstanding works therefore, alone are described. In the reign of Akbar, Abul Fazl wrote *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* which are unique in their character. The language of *Akbarnama* is so ornate and grandiloquent that it gets on the nerves of western readers who fail to appreciate that the author has tried to couch the glories of his great patron in terms commensurate with them. *Ain-i-Akbari* presents such a detailed account of the organisation of government, philosophy and literature of the people as is nowhere met with in medieval historiography. Nowhere in Asia or Europe was such a work produced at that time. If the indiscreet spoliators of Agra and Delhi had not destroyed the basic material on which this stupendous work was based, the prestige of its author would have risen higher still. One of the charges against Abul Fazl is that his works are adulatory of his master. This is only superficially true. Those who are familiar with the eastern style of literary composition will find that despite the general courtesy and urbanity of its tone it does mention the failures of Akbar as well. Very different from this is Badaoni's *Muntakhab-ut-tawarikh* which passes stringent strictures against the religious policy of the Emperor. It contains much other useful and interesting material too but as a piece of literature it is very mediocre. Other notable works of this period are *Tabqat-i-Akbari* by Nizamuddin Ahmad and *Tarikh-i-Alfi*—a joint work of a number of authors.

In the reign of Jahangir *Iqbalnama* was composed by Mutmid Khan, *Maasir-i-Jahangiri* by Khwaja Kamgar, *Makhzan-i-Afghani* by Niamatullah, *Tarikh-i-Ferishta* by Muhammad Qasim Ferishta and *Maasir-i-Rahimi* by Mulla Nahawandi.

The most important work of the reign of Shahjahan is *Padshahnama* by Abdul Hamid Lahori although *Shahjahannama* by Inayat Khan, *Padshahnama* by Qazwini and *Amal Saleh* by Muhammad Saleh are also useful. In the reign of Aurangzeb, Khafi Khan wrote *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*, Sujan Ray Khatri wrote *Khulasat-ut-tawarikh* and Ishwar Das *Fatuh-i-Alamgiri*. The successors of Aurangzeb had their own historians but the most notable work dealing with the history of the Later Mughals is *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin*. Many provincial histories were also compiled, the most notable among which is *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*.

Among the autobiographies of this period, three are particularly noteworthy: (1) *Tuzuk-i-Babari* by Babar (2) *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* by Jahangir and (3) Abul Fazl's autobiography appended to *Ain-i-Akbari*. In letter-writing Abul Fazl and Aurangzeb won the greatest renown although the epistolary art of Munir, Brahman, Jay Singh, Afzal Khan and Sadullah Khan has also evoked admiration.

History

Letters and Auto-
biographies

Among other prose works of this period the most notable are those which deal with the lives of saints, philosophy and religion. Among the works of this class special

Other prose works. mention must be made of *Dabistan-i-Mazahab* by Mohsin Fani, *Akhbar-ul-Akhyar* by Abdul Haq Muhaddis, *Safinat-ul-Auliya*, *Sakinat-ul-Auliya*, *Risala-i-Haqnama* and *Majmua-ul-Bahrain* by Dara and the *Maktubat* by Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi *Mujaddid Alif Sani*.

This was an important period in the development of local Indian languages. Religious reformers cropped up in every part of the land and they expressed their teachings in the language of the people in order to make a direct appeal to their hearts. Some

poets wrote in praise of kings or brave captains of war. Some composed works of history while still others composed love poetry reflecting the moral standards and vices prevailing at the court. They wrote on *Nakh-Shikh-Varnan* (head to foot description of women) *Nayika Bhed* (types of women from a lover's point of view) and prosody. They also composed stray verses called *pads*, *sakhis*, *kavittas*, *dohas*, *sorathas* etc. on a variety of subjects.

In the *Brajhasa* and *Awadhi* dialects of Hindi many excellent works were composed about all of whom it is impossible to speak here even in the most concise manner. The poets of this period may be divided into 5 groups : (1) *Premmargi Sufis*, (2) *Nirguna Panthi sants*, (3) *Rama Bhakti Shakha*, (4) *Krishna Bhakti Shakha* and (5) *Ritikalin Shakha*.

The best representative of Sufistic poets believing in the doctrine of love is Malik Muhammad Jayasi whose *Padmaval* is said to have been composed in the reign of Sher Shah or Ibrahim Lodi. It speaks of spiritual progress of a seeker after truth in Hindu Philosophical terminology. This has been done in the form of an allegory and its choice diction and technical skill have made it a work of high literary merit.

Among saints of the *Nirguna* School, Dadu, Malukdas and Sundar Das deserve special mention. Their compositions may not be marked out by literary merit but they made a strong appeal to their followers and gained great popularity among them.

The greatest poet, in the school devoted to Rama, is Tulsidas, a reference to whose wide influence on the Hindu mind has already been made in an earlier chapter. Tulsidas does not command respect merely for his all-pervasive moral and religious tone. He is much greater as a poet. Many people before and after him adopted the Doha (couplet) and Chaupai (quatrain) as the favourite form of their expression but none has been able to approach the high standard of excellence he

reached in his immortal work, *Ramacharit-manas*. All attempts at imitation have been a complete failure and later addenda in the *Manas* appear so incongruous that weeding them out presents no difficulty to a trained literary critic. In recent years, it has been translated into European languages so that Tulsidas has now acquired a worldwide recognition. No other Hindi poet has received such wide attention at the hands of literary critics and admirers. The next notable figure in this group is Nabhadass who composed *Bhaktamal* (lives of saints).

Among the poet devotees of Krishna, Surdas occupies the same pre-eminence as Tulsidas occupied among the poet-devotees of Rama. All dispassionate critics who have made a comparative study of Tulsidas and Surdas find that both excel each other in one respect or the other but neither has an unchallenged superiority over the other taken as a whole. But there is no third who might challenge comparison with either of them. Sur composed stray verses compiled under the title '*Sursagar*' (a sea of verses by Surdas). A charming diction and a rapturous sensuousness vibrant with loving devotion to Krishna are the most outstanding features of his poems. Other notable poets of this group were Nanddas, Mirabai and Raskhan (a Muslim devotee of Krishna).

Poets attached to Mughal court or courtiers included Birbal, Gang, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Sundar Das, Chintamani and Kavindracharya. Among them the literary output of Rahim and Chintamani are of greater merit.

Other notable Hindi poets of this age were Keshavadas, Senapati, Deva, Bihari, Matiram, Bhushan and Padmakar. Keshava is noted for his learning especially of the technical aspect of poetry. Deva and Bihari wrote erotic poetry and spent all their ingenuity in developing an artificial style. Padmakar is remarkable for mere verbal effect by alliteration and other artificial methods. Bhushan is unique in the sense that he alone wrote heroic poetry in praise of the champions of Hindudom. From a purely literary standpoint, Deva and Bihari stand pre-eminent in this group though the subject-matter of their poems is lewd and debasing in its effect.

A new language called Urdu developed during this period. It was the result of a cross-breed between Persian and Hindi.

Urdu Literature Urdu had its beginning probably in Muslim cantonments but as a literary form it developed at Delhi, in the Deccan and at Lucknow. The more notable Urdu poets of this period were Nusrati Bijapuri, Wali Aurangabadi, Khan-i-Arzu and Hatim. But it blossomed out in its full glory much later than the close of our period.

Bengali language and literature also took great strides during this period. This was mainly the effect of religious reform move-

ments. Chaitanya had such a tremendous influence on the minds of the people of Bengal that a number of Bengali Literature works were composed dealing with his life and teachings, and biographies of his chief followers. These works throw welcome light not only on the life and teachings of saints of this school but also on contemporary Hindu society in Bengal. The most famous among such writings are *Chaitanya Charitamrita* by Krishnadas Kaviraj, the best biography of Lord Gauranga, *Chaitanya Bhagwat* and another biography of Chaitanya by Vrindabandas and *Bhakti Ratnakar* by Narahari Chakravarti, a most detailed biography of Chaitanya. Other popular writings of this period are translations from Sanskrit. *Kavi Kankan Chandi*, by Mukundram Chakravarti, *Mahabharata* by Kashi ramdas and the *Ramayana* by Krittivasa have since found a place in every Hindu home in Bengal.

Similarly Rajasthani, Gujerati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Oriya and Maithili also registered considerable progress and there was a fine crop of writings, mostly religious in these languages.

The Mughal Emperors were fond of collecting fine books. Babar was a man of literary tastes and whatever time he could snatch from his busy life was spent in reading and writing. When he chanced to find Ghazi Khan's library, he took every care to preserve its contents. Humayun too loved to spend some time in his library and he was never without book even during his campaigns. His successors upto Aurangzeb were fond of books. An attempt was therefore made to make these books as attractive and pleasing as possible. Calligraphy was in those days practised as a fine art. Abul Fazl mentions 8 different styles of artistic writing. Dara himself was an excellent calligraphist and could perfectly imitate Shahjahan's signature. Aurangzeb too had a fine hand and respected those who wrote well. It was these trained calligraphists of excellence that were employed to execute the books of the imperial library. They were illustrated with fine portraits and each page was neatly finished with artistic borders and binding was tastefully executed. There are some books which have certain footnotes written all round the border without in any way affecting the beauty and form of the text in the centre.

Just as the Mughals made a special contribution to the art of book-making although they overlooked the advantages of printing to promotion of learning among the masses, similarly, they made a special contribution to the field of painting as well. Specimens of ancient Indian painting are still extant but mostly in the form of mural paintings with religious motifs. Whether there was any miniature painting specially portraiture of a purely

secular character, we do not know. Book illustrations are also of a crude type. The inference from this is that either this aspect of painting was neglected in those days or its specimens have been destroyed by time.

For a number of centuries before the coming of the Turks to India, Painting as an art had been languishing and we have no good specimens of art of this period. It appears that with the spread of Buddhism to Tibet, China and Central Asia, Indian art traditions also reached those lands and it is these that returned to India with the Timurids with local variations and emendatisms. But by the 16th century it had undergone such vital changes that it appeared in an altogether new style and its motifs became utterly foreign to the country.

Babar refers in his memoirs to Bihzad and pays high tribute to his genius as a painter. He has been called the Raphael of the east. His followers formed a distinctive school of their own and exercised considerable influence over the art of painting in Persia, India and Central Asia.

Babar's appreciation of the art of Bihzad and the manner of his portrayal of natural scenes suggests that he was gifted with the talent of a painter. But he did not have adequate leisure to develop his potentialities in this regard. Humayun was also interested in painting and when he went to Persia he contacted local talent and induced Mir Sayyad Ali and Khwaja Abdus Samad to enter his service when better times returned. He was still at Kabul when they joined him and himself took lessons in painting besides Akbar who was put under their charge.

On Humayun's restoration to India, these two painters accompanied him. Thus Akbar got the services of these master painters from the very outset and he employed them in building up an Indian School of painting. Akbar showed great respect to foreign painters but he was averse to depending on mere imported talent. He therefore collected local people with artistic potentialities and placed them under the guidance of Mir Sayyad Ali and Abdus Samad who trained them in the intricacies of the art. The Emperor personally examined their work every week and gave them rewards in proportion to the extent of their progress. He also made a provision for dividing the painters into different groups according to their special aptitudes and gave them intensive training in only one branch or aspect of painting so that at least in that aspect they might acquire maturity within a short time. Earlier paintings of the reign of Akbar, therefore, are seldom the handiwork of a single painter. Instead, they represent the effect of joint labour by a group of specialists each doing only that part of the work in which he had acquired special proficiency.

Akbar took one other measure to help Indian painters. He acquired a collection of the masterpieces of foreign painters and

displayed them on the walls of the college of painting to serve as models to Indian artists.

According to Abul Fazl, there were 100 good painters at the court while there were many others of an inferior merit. Even the hundred of the better sort were not all of the same standard. The best foreign painters were Mir Sayyad Ali, Abdus Samad and Farrukh Beg. Among local painters, Dashwant, the disciple of Abdus Samad was decidedly the best. He was originally a palanquin bearing *kahar* but the Emperor recognized his talent and opened the door for his fame and honour by putting him into the college of painting. Other Indian painters of repute were Basawan, Tarachand, Sanwaldas, Keshava and Jagannath.

In the reign of Akbar some mural painting was also executed particularly at Fatehpur Sikri. But it was miniature painting and portraiture that received the greatest attention. Most of the paintings were intended to illustrate the books in the imperial library. But there were independent pieces too. These portrayed the Emperor or his courtiers or special scenes related to court. The earlier paintings are essentially Persian in style and bear a strong foreign impress. But in course of time as a result of free association between the Indian and the foreign artists the Indian element became gradually more and more pronounced till a new style was developed by harmoniously blending the Persian and Indian elements.

The painters of Jahangir produced much better work in comparison to that of the painters of the previous reign. During his reign, some of the master painters of Akbar's reign continued to work while some new talent was imported. The most distinguished painters of his reign were Abul Hasan, Aqa Riza, Mansur, Muhammad Nadir, Bishandas, Manohar and Govardhan. Jahangir himself was an excellent art critic. According to his judgment, the best among them was Abul Hasan while Mansur ranked just below him and he had conferred on them the titles of *Nadir-uz-Zaman* and *Nadir-ul-Asar* respectively. From the paintings that have come down to us, it appears that Bishandas was the ablest portrait painter while Mansur and Manohar had special aptitude for painting natural scenes and birds and beasts.

Under Jahangir, painting reached its highest water-mark. No attempt was made to portray the prophet or scenes connected with his life. This was done to respect the religious susceptibilities of orthodox Muslims. The Timurids were interested in painting but they had no intention of provoking needless opposition. The Hindus had no such inhibitions. Hence, there was no bar to illustrating *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Similarly, saints and philosophers who were not averse to portraiture were chosen as motifs for painting. It may, therefore, be broadly asserted that Mughal painters scrupulously avoided religi-

ous motifs, such as Muhammad, the temple at Mecca, *Kaaba*, or a congregation engaged in prayer. Another special feature of Mughal painting is that the portraiture in it is not of imaginary figures but of real individuals. The painter had therefore to be a keen observer not only of physiognomy but also of proper expression of the face at a particular moment in life. What he saw with the eye, he was expected to portray with his brush. It therefore required great patience and intensive practice. Bishandas had been sent to Persia and he brought from there portraits of the Shah and his principal courtiers drawn by himself. There are very few portraits of royal ladies and it is doubtful whether those that exist are really genuine because there was strict purdah in those days. May be some *khwajasaras* had also been trained in painting and they might have been employed for drawing the facial likeness while the rest of the work was completed by experts. Or the rigours of purdah might have been relaxed in order to assist the painter. Thirdly, its dominant note is realism and the flora and fauna as depicted in a painting have been taken from real life. Even if there were some such defects in the paintings of the reign of Akbar, they were thoroughly eliminated under Jahangir and one can easily recognize what trees, creepers, flowers or fruits have been represented in a painting of this reign. The scenic background is also taken from real life. Thus for instance a scene from Kashmir will never have a tree that does not really grow at the place represented in the painting. Nor do they ever show flowers that do not actually blossom together. Their portrayal of nature, therefore, is of a very high order. Fourthly, the pigments used have been carefully chosen and tastefully employed. Right use of pigments of appropriate brightness impart great vigour and life to their paintings. The pigments most commonly employed were gold, blue, green, red and silvery white in different shades and combinations. The hawk and the peacock have been brilliantly painted. Among animal paintings, the best admired are a pair of bulls yoked to a bullock-cart, and elephants, horses, tigers and leopards in a scene of hunting or fighting. Mounting of pictures and embellishing them with artistic foliated borders is also a special feature of Mughal miniature painting. In the reign of Shahjahan when painting as an art began to decline, special attention was paid to improving the art of border-making and use of brighter pigments. Representations of scenes of hunting, audience hall, marriage, birth or coronation have also been executed with success and in proper perspective. They could pack details without affecting the sense of harmony or artistic appeal. Thus the painters of this period attained a great all-round success.

But they do not mirror the life of the common people. Secondly, because of peculiar notions of decency prevalent at the

court they had no opportunity of painting a bare human body and cultivate the art of showing correct anatomy and right proportion of limb and muscle. Thirdly, they had not attained as much success in depicting motion and activity as in the portrayal of correct expression and play of emotions. They have given us an insight into the tastes and court habits of the Emperors but have neglected common themes depicting the life of the masses. This deficiency was removed only when Aurangzeb disbanded court painters and when some of them took to painting scenes from common life in order to earn a living by catering to the tastes of the people.

The Mughals were builders and under their patronage architecture made great progress during this period. When Babar came to India, he was not much impressed by Indian buildings. He therefore sought to improve the art of building by introducing necessary improvements. He does not seem to have been dissatisfied with the way mosques or tombs were built because the mosques built during his reign at Sambhal, Ayodhya and Panipat show no marked difference in style. It was domestic art that secured his reforming attention. He built baths, baolis and underground rooms to escape the dust, heat and hot winds of India. But they seem to have been destroyed by the Sur successors. Or Akbar might have destroyed them when he started wholesale reconstruction of the capital just as Shahjahan demolished the buildings of Akbar because they offended against his sense of aesthetic beauty.

Under Humayun no special progress appears to have been made in the realm of architecture. Just as Akbar built up an extensive empire by incorporating local kingdoms, similarly, he evolved a new style of Indian architecture by utilizing the services of local talent drawn from different parts of the country and built a number of forts, palaces, mosques and tombs as specimens of this art. In comparison to the buildings of the preceding generations, his buildings have a distinctive individuality of their own and appear to belong to a different class altogether. It may not be wholly true that buildings of this period were planned and executed by foreigners but this is positive that certain foreign features were definitely assimilated. But there is no slavish imitation of foreign models. Everything is dressed up in an Indian garb by such a natural process of assimilation that the mosques or tombs built in India have no family affinity to those in Persia, Transoxiana or Turkey. The Taj at Agra could be built in India alone and nowhere else. That is why though it has had numerous foreign admirers it has nowhere been imitated and continues to this day a unique Indian mausoleum without anything like it anywhere in the world.

Fergusson says that a whole volume is needed to furnish an account of the buildings of Akbar. This may indicate the extensive character of his constructions. The first great building of this period is the *Tomb of Humayun* at Delhi completed in 1565 at a cost of 15 lakhs of rupees. In a sense, it is a very plain structure and yet it has a charm of its own though it has been placed in the midst of a garden in imitation of the Persian style. This was the first building in which white marble has been used in building the dome and the arches to provide a sense of relief. Another building of the same class is Akbar's tomb at Sikandara. Though begun in the reign of Akbar, it was completed in 1613 in the reign of Jahangir after a lapse of twenty years and at a cost of 15 lakhs of rupees. Its style resembles a Hindu temple or a Buddhist *Vihara*. Arches and kiosks have been admirably used to produce an effect of dignity and grandeur. The topmost story has been built in white marble and is certainly the work of Jahangir. This too is placed in the centre of a specially designed garden and the imposing portal which leads into the garden is in harmony with the general design of the main structure.

Akbar built excellent forts at Agra, Allahabad, Ajmer and Lahore and housed in them palaces, civil quarters, offices *etc.* They have all been done in red sand-stone. The most famous buildings of the reign of Akbar are located at Fatehpur Sikri. Here he built palaces and residences for himself and his consorts, offices for the staff and a mosque whose gateway occupies an important place in the Mughal monuments. The most remarkable civil structures at Sikri are *Jodhbai's Palace*, *Birbal's Palace*, the *Golden Palace of Maryam-uz-zamani*, and the *Turkish Sultana's Palace*. The decorative elements in these palaces are of a high order and the Golden Palace has obvious Hindu features. The *Jama Mosque* is one of the largest of its kind in India and its gateway which Akbar had built anew after his conquest of the Deccan dominates the whole scene. The *Buland Darwaza* as this imposing gateway is called, rises 134 above the plinth and has steps leading down descending to a depth of 42 feet. Hence, from the level ground below, it rises to the unprecedented height of 176 feet. It is the first successful attempt at harmonising a large portal with the main structure without in any way sacrificing artistic effect.

The construction work at Sikri began in 1569 and by 1571 most of its buildings had been completed. But the *Jama Mosque* took longer to build while the *Buland Darwaza* was completed as late as 1602. The *Tomb of Shaikh Salim Chishti* inside the quadrangle is also a later addition. It has been built exclusively of white marble and contains fine lattice work. Thus the chief characteristics of Akbar's buildings are (1) Extensive use of red sand-stone, (2) Synthesis of Hindu and Muslim art-traditions,

(3) construction of better domes, arches and portals, (4) placing tombs in floral surroundings by building artificial gardens round them, (5) Construction of buildings for civilian purposes and (6) construction of impregnable forts at tremendous costs e.g. the Agra fort at a cost of 35 lakhs of rupees.

The successor of Akbar was more interested in painting. Hence, during his reign, architecture did not make much headway. Among the buildings of his reign the

Under Jahangir more remarkable are the *Tomb of Etmad-ud-daula* at Agra and the *Khusrau Bagh* at Allāhabad. In Etmad-ud-daula's tomb pietra dura work was for the first time used on an extensive scale.

Under Shahjahan, architecture reached its highest development. He was fond of erecting buildings and he had given evidence of his refined taste when still a prince.

Under Shahjahan Most of his buildings are found in Delhi or Agra. In Agra he demolished many of Akbar's buildings to replace them with more picturesque structures under his care. Among these buildings, the *Pearl Mosque*, the *Jama Mosque*, *Diwan-i-Am*, *Diwan-i-Khas* and *Saman Burj* deserve special mention. Similar buildings, but superior in art, were constructed at Delhi. In 1638, he built a new fort at Delhi which is known to this day as the Red Fort of Delhi. He planned a new city inside the fort and called it Shahjahanabad. Within the fort the *Diwan-i-Am* and the *Diwan-i-Khas* have been adorned with finest pietra dura work. It appears as if the art of the painter and the jeweller has been rendered in stone. Outside the fort, he built a *Jama Mosque* which is the largest and the most remarkable mosque of this period.

The most beautiful creation of this reign was the world-famous Taj Mahal raised to house the earthly remains of the Emperor's dearly loved wife Mumtaz Begam. It stands on the bank of the Jumna in a most pleasing natural setting. The grandeur and artistic beauty of the Taj has been described by travellers, historians and art-critics in terms which may sound exaggerated to one who has not had the opportunity to see it himself. But on a close examination of the mausoleum one is struck by the extreme care devoted to making each bit of it perfect in itself and perfect in harmony with the rest. The general plan and layout of the garden, its water-courses, the subsidiary structures raised up as offsets, the entrance Portal, the raised platform on which it stands, the position and character of its minarets, its dome and arches, the pietra dura embellishment and the artistic writing on the wall, the whiteness of its stone to serve as an ideal background for colour and design, in short, every part and aspect of it has been harmoniously blended into a general plan of exquisite beauty and elegance. Before the work of construction was actually started, meticulous care was taken to make the

plan absolutely faultless. Hence its models were prepared on the basis of agreed decisions among expert engineers and designers collected for the purpose from far and near. The model was again carefully examined and each little detail subjected to all possible tests before the plan and the model were finally approved. In course of construction, anything that was not found to be ideally perfect was demolished without any regard for expense. The Emperor wanted to immortalise the name of his consort by raising a mausoleum which should for ever remain unrivalled and unique among the greatest mausoleums of the world. It took 22 years to complete and cost crores of rupees.

Shahjahan had desired to build another mausoleum for himself. As a matter of fact, work was already started on this. But soon after, there was a revolution which made the Emperor a prisoner at the hands of his son whose puritanical simplicity rejected this expense as useless and illegal. Consequently, when Shahjahan died, his mortal remains were also interned beside the tomb of his consort. That it upset the harmony of the room below where the tomb occupied the central position, did not seem to be a matter of any consequence to Aurangzeb. Thus what Shahjahan had desired to be faultless and perfect has a discordant note in the most central place of the mausoleum.

After the death of Shahjahan, architecture underwent a rapid decline because Aurangzeb was hostile to all arts. Nor was there a revival after his death and the buildings of this later period are jejune and lifeless.

Hindu and Muslim mansabdars of the Emperor, Rajput Rajas of Rajputana and Central India, the rulers of Bijapur and Golkunda, the founders of powerful religious sects and private individuals also reared up numerous buildings during this period but most of them have been destroyed by ravages of time or fits of fanatical fury. Among those that survive special mention may be made of the *Man Mandir* at Gwalior, the *Govind Deva Temple* at Brindaban, *Hawa Mahal* at Jaipur, the *Gol Gumbaz* at Bijapur and the Sikh temple at Amritsar. Among those that were destroyed were the palace and temples at Orchha built by Vir Singh Bundela, the Keshava Raj Temple at Mathura and numerous temples at Gokul, Vrindaban, Hardwar, Allahabad, Benares and other Hindu centres.

Music also made great progress during this period. Both Babar and Humayun were interested in music and poetry. Baz Bahadur, the Afghan ruler of Malwa in the early years of his reign and later as *mansabdar* under him was a great musician himself and so was Rupmati, the mistress of his affections and dotage. Akbar had a large troupe of excellent musicians at his court.

When he heard of the fame of Tansen a court-musician of Ramachandra, the Raja of Bhata, he sent a request to the latter to send the master-musician to his court. The Raja had no means to refuse and was forced to comply. When Tansen came to Agra, he became the head of the royal musicians and earned wide fame and popularity. Among the 36 names of musicians mentioned in the *Ain* most of the singers are Indians and hailed from Gwalior or Dhar while most of the instrumentalists have foreign names but were probably drawn from Kashmir where a school of Irani and another of Turani music had been founded by Zain-ul-abidin. Thus an overwhelming majority of Akbar's musicians were local people with just a smattering from outside specially Transoxiana. The name of Baiju Baora is associated by traditions with the court of Akbar, but Abul Fazl does not mention him. Ramdas who had formerly been in the court of Islam Shah was second only to Tansen. His son Sur Das was also a noted musician at court. Abul Fazl mentions the presence of female musicians also but Muslim etiquette probably forbade him from mentioning them by name.

The chief new musicians under Jahangir were Jahangir-dad, Chatr Khan, Parwizdad, Khurramdad, Makhu and Hamza. Shahjahan evinced greater interest in music and had a number of excellent dancing girls. Shahjahan was particularly fond of *Dhrupad*. The best singer of this tune in his court was Lal Khan, a son-in-law of Tansen or according to Blochmann of Tansen's son Bilas. The Emperor conferred on him the title of '*Gunsamundar*'. Among the Hindu musicians at his court, the most distinguished was Pandit Jagannath who was both a composer and a singer and had been conferred the title of *Maha-kaviraj*. Sukhsen and Surasen were instrumentalists of renown.

In the reign of Aurangzeb music was ceremoniously buried amid loud lamentations of its votaries and curses of the Emperor not to show itself again. But after his death, his grandson Jahandar Shah revived it to unprecedented notoriety when he raised Lal Kumari from the status of a prostitute to a royal consort. But the decline of the empire left the Emperors without funds to patronise arts and letters freely. Hence music languished at court but flourished outside and the tradition never died out.

Outside the court special mention has been made of Govind-swami a disciple of Vitthalnath who according to tradition excelled even Tansen who occasionally went to the Swami to listen to his rapturous melodies.

The foregoing account of cultural development in the later medieval age clearly brings out that except for the growth of provincial languages and construction of Hindu temples the whole gamut of this unprecedented cultural activity owed its inspiration to the enlightened rulers of this age. The most notable among

Cultural importance of the age

them was Akbar who had a strong sense of synthesis and evolved an essentially Indian culture. Literature, music, architecture, painting, calligraphy—nothing escaped his careful eye and he carried each one of them far on the road to progress. No other ruler after him had that breadth of vision, universal sympathy and flight of imagination which was peculiarly his. Jahangir and Shahjahan together could not do what he had done singly while Aurangzeb not only dug the grave of the empire but tried to dry up all independent thinking which was the source and inspiration of all cultural activity. Hence as far as cultural development was concerned its life-springs began to dry up as soon as Shahjahan was rudely unseated to make room for his son.

CHAPTER XXIX

CONCLUSION

A review of the cultural, political and military achievements of the later medieval age when viewed in relation to modern conditions in this land inspire respect and gratitude towards the makers of history of that age. According to contemporary political ideals, foundation of a large empire was regarded a laudable undertaking. Internal peace could be made permanent and secure only after political anarchy had ended. And establishment of peace would lead to progress in agriculture, trade and industry as well as cultural development of the land. The wealth and resources of the rulers were a matter of pride to the people of those days who gloried in the superiority of their masters over their neighbours. Democratic tendencies had only a limited success in certain far corners of the world and were utterly unheard of in Asia of those days. Hence the people had a natural reverence for strong rulers and there was a sense of pride in being the subjects of powerful monarchs even though it might bring them no economic or moral gain. The Timurid Emperors of Delhi and Agra satisfied the popular hunger for glory and made such an impression on them that they described them as the Shadow of God, Master of the Universe *etc.* and the *Darshaniyas* had such a sense of reverence for them that they would not take food or drink without having the '*darshan*' of the Emperor.'

These rulers did not commit the error of trying to rule by the sword alone. They maintained large armies no doubt but they tried to broad-base their authority on the consent of the governed. They tried to understand what their subjects desired and did their best to satisfy them. They treated them with generosity and affection and there was no ruler from Babar to Aurangzeb who did not recognize the necessity of keeping a majority of the people on his side. Some of them secured the affections of their subjects in a much wider measure than the rest. But even against Aurangzeb, despite his policy of religious persecution, there was no general rising of the people because religious persecution was generally limited to the urban areas and the people of those days were generally so selfish and self-centred that the sufferings and oppressions of people unknown to them personally did not disturb their equanimity for long.

As compared to the Sultans of Delhi, the Timurids established a more enlightened and a more successful government. They rendered some service to each section of the Indian community. They respected the Brahmins, attached them to the judicial machinery of the state and gave them an honoured place in the cultural sphere. While recruiting the army personnel, they did not attach so much importance to the caste, colour, and creed of the recruit, as to his military fitness. Consequently, the armed forces of the state contained, beside the Rajputs, Brahmins and Khattris, the Shudras as well. They were solicitous of the interests of the business community, although they did not do all that was possible and desirable. They tried to check social injustice and inequality and regarded themselves as the guardians and rulers of the entire population and did not identify themselves with any sectional or communal interests. The system of government established by them had such a tremendous influence on the country that Rajput and Maratha institutions were considerably affected by it. The Britishers long retained the general machinery of government as they found it with only minor adjustments here and there. Even today there are survivals of their machinery of government specially in the judicial organisation, revenue administration and state charities. It must therefore be admitted that despite their defects and drawbacks, the administrative institutions and traditions founded by them had sufficient vitality and affected the life of the country as a whole.

They gave a new turn to the cultural development of the land. The sartorial habits created by them persist to this day and the official dress of our diplomatic representatives abroad still retains unmistakable signs of Timurid influence. Urdu and Persian terminology had such a universal influence that there is hardly any Indian language which does not bear a strong impress of its influence in its vocabulary. This improved and enriched their diction. The progress made in music, painting and architecture evokes praise even today and has greatly influenced the course of cultural development in modern times.

Some of their defects were the gift of the age in which they lived. They were sometimes guilty of religious persecution. But if a comparison is made between the policy of Aurangzeb and that of the contemporary rulers of England, Spain, France, Holland, Turkey, Persia or Transoxiana, he would appear generous and humane. We condemn him in this respect because he did not tread the path of progress shown to him by his predecessors and tried to put the clock back instead of going boldly ahead. But contrary to the contemporary European practice, he gave employment to followers of all creeds and permitted them to worship their God as they thought best. He neither burnt people alive for the purification of their souls nor did he arrange bonfires of religious books of others. Instead, he continued the state grant to infidel institutions in a number of cases.

The Timurids did not promote printing of books. But this was mainly due to the fact that their sense of aesthetic beauty would not permit defilement of their books by machine. They had no scheme of general public education. But education according to the Indian and Islamic ideals was a part of religion and therefore it was not the duty of the state to establish educational institutions of different grades and types for the people as a whole. They made grants to educational institutions, gave stipends and maintenance allowances to the votaries of learning and in some cases established model institutions. Nothing more was expected of them according to the prevailing standards. If disaffected Mullahs had not preached sedition, Akbar would not have ordered closure of village schools and if influence of Brahmin teachers had not led to apostacy from Islam, Aurangzeb would not have interfered with the *Pathshalas* of the Hindus. Even in spite of this, it is very unlikely that the prohibitions should have been enforced for long or even temporarily on a universal basis.

Luxury and sensuality of the rulers and their courtiers has been subjected to great strictures in the foregoing chapters but the popular reaction may be gauged from the fact that neither the Hindus nor the Muslims were satisfied with puritanism of Aurangzeb. They have been criticised only because they could have followed in the footsteps of Akbar which they did not do. According to contemporary standards, they were perhaps doing nothing palpably wrong. But they were Emperors of India and were gifted with penetrating vision which they could have employed better if they had imbibed the moral standards of this country. They responded to the call of the times in a number of cases but in others they failed to see beyond their noses although it was possible to do so. If they had not been great, they would not have been expected to tread the path of greatness. They have come in for adverse comment only because they did not maintain a uniform standard of greatness in all their activities and ways of life.

The masses had moral stamina. The rural population was bold and self-reliant. Percentage of literacy among them was higher than today. They had an essentially religious temper and did not equate vulgarity with modernism or licence with liberty. Respect for the elders, regard for moral values and general religiosity was considered a part of urbanity and good manners. In that sense, the masses and the classes were more progressive than today. They had an admirable capacity for adjustment to new conditions. Most of the people in rural areas were agriculturists. But they could take to soldiering as well. Some of them were so bold and proud that when offended by a policy which they considered wrong and unjust, they organised opposition to imperial authority. led raids against centres of its power and

seized its treasures. It was persons of this temperament and mettle that made possible the success of Shivaji, Maharana Pratap, Chhatrasal, Churaman, Guru Govind Singh and Banda Bahadur. Some of them went out as traders and there are references to Indian traders going far towards the east and the west.

For a man of ability and genius there was wide scope for progress. Even the highest place in the state was not beyond his grasp and we come in contact with numerous people who started from humble beginnings and reached the highest rung of the political ladder. Sher Shah, Hemu, Shivaji, Kavi Kalash, Abul Fazl, Balaji Vishwanath, Malhar Rao Holkar, Surajmal, Banda Bahadur and others like them made rapid progress to glory. About some of them our knowledge is so scanty that their rise to fame appears metcoric. Hemu is said to have been a petty shopkeeper. Under Islam Shah he was a *persona non grata* but two years after his death, he became the master of Delhi and Agra and assumed the title of Vikramaditya. Kavi Kalash was a non-descript Kanyakubja Brahmin of Allahabad but on going to the Deccan, he became the prime minister and commander-in-chief of Shambhuji and all his non-Maratha contemporaries found him worthy of the offices he occupied. A palanquin bearing *kahar* shot up as the greatest Indian painter of his day and a physician became the governor of Gujarat.

Many important developments took place in the religious domain as well. A man has both vices and virtues but most of the religious leaders led exemplary moral life. Undoubtedly there were some who fell a prey to carnal passions and sensual desires and abused the trust and confidence reposed in them. But that is true even today. What is particularly remarkable is that most of the sects founded during this period still have numerous followers and the school of *Bhakti* holds the field even today as the dominant school of spiritual thought.

Akbar's talent for harmony and synthesis, Tulsi's regard for the social norms, Shivaji and Rana Pratap's love of liberty, Aurangzeb's trust in God's mercy and protection continue to inspire people to progress even to this day. Judged from modern standards, the medieval age may have had its short-comings but it was not devoid of ennobling and elevating forces. For a proper evaluation and solution of modern problems, for their successes and failures, therefore, an intelligent study of medieval Indian history may prove very enlightening.

INDEX

- Abbas Khan, 61
 Abbas Safawi, 143
 Abdali, 344, 353, 358
 Abdul Aziz, 149, 150
 Abdul Ghaffar, 500
 Abdul Hamid (Lahori), 390, 506
 Abdul Haq Muhaddis, 507
 Abdullah (Sayad), 294
 Abdullah Khan, 112, 163, 238
 Abdullah Khan Uzbek, 117, 129, 147, 148, 154, 333
 Abdullah Qutbshah, 171, 183
 Abdullah Sultanpuri, 454, 455, 459
 Abdul Latif, 98, 105, 457
 Abdul Muhammâd, 180
 Abdul Qadir, 140
 Abd-ul-Samad, 257
 Abdul-Razzak-Lari, 186
 Abd-un-Nabi, 245, 253, 255, 459
 Abdur-Rahim-Khan-i-Khana, 142, 144, 156-158, 164, 264, 463, 480, 505, 508.
 Abhay Singh Rathor, 327
 Abul Fazl, 85, 148, 157, 159, 260, 261, 262, 368, 369, 399, 401, 402, 407, 421-423, 455, 457, 458, 460, 462, 470, 480, 481, 486, 487, 497, 504, 505, 506, 509, 511, 517, 522
 Abul Hasan, 170, 183-186, 511.
 Abul Khair, 3, 4
 Abul Qasin, 57
 Abu Said, 3, 4, 359
 Adham Khan, 96, 98, 117, 333, 338
 Adil Khan, 41, 42, 57, 58, 61-65, 67, 153
 Adil Khan II, 153
 Adil Khan III, 153
 Adil Shah, 51, 88, 92-95, 99, 119, 162, 194, 196-199, 202, 206-208, 210, 212, 213, 215, 375, 413
 Adina Beg, 354
 Afganistan, 4, 11, 25, 45, 99, 139, 233, 274, 281, 344, 347, 361
 Afzal Khan, 166, 194, 199-202, 209, 506
 Agra, 5, 6, 8-10, 13-16, 18, 29, 34-36, 39, 42, 44, 45, 50, 52, 56-60, 66, 70, 71, 79, 82, 88, 89, 92-94, 99, 116, 126, 137, 153, 169, 204, 205, 211, 218, 227, 238, 246, 261, 275, 277-282, 287, 288, 292, 315, 341, 342, 344, 348, 365, 389, 427, 469, 473, 497, 502, 506, 513-515, 517, 519, 522
 Ahmad, 28
 Ahmadabad, 128, 131, 319, 389, 466, 497
 Ahmadanagar, 34, 100, 102, 152-159, 161-165, 168-70, 190, 194, 219, 227, 228, 232, 287, 326, 390, 435, 502
 Ahmad Bangash, 354, *see* Ahmad Shah
 Ahmad Khan, Abdali
 Ahmad Khan Abdali
 Ahmad Khan Sur, 71
 Ahmad Shah, 7, 152, 328, 329, 352, 356, 362
 Ahmad Shah (Gujrati), 127, 128
 Ahmad Shah Abdali, 233, 295, 328, 343, 351, 419, 478
 Ajatsatru, 107
 Ajit Singh, 112, 113, 231, 233, 241, 242, 244, 245, 254, 290, 293, 294, 306, 362
 Ajmer, 34, 61, 95, 108, 112, 113, 116, 242, 245, 287, 288, 389, 409, 427, 428, 464, 514
 Akanna, 184, 185, 192
 Akbar, 15, 21, 50, 52, 62, 71, 72, 84-96, 98-102, 105-107, 113, 114, 116-118, 120, 122, 124, 128, 129-131, 135-142, 150-152, 154, 159, 160, 161, 163, 165-169, 181, 182, 189, 210, 213-215, 222-223, 227, 228, 232, 236, 237, 241-243, 249, 259-267, 271, 284, 286, 296, 332-334, 360, 362-379, 383, 384, 387, 388, 390, 397, 399, 400, 401, 403, 405, 408, 414, 415, 417, 418, 420, 421, 422, 424, 428-431, 450, 452-462, 465, 466, 469, 471, 472, 477, 478, 481, 486, 487, 491, 492, 494, 498, 499, 502, 504-506, 511-518, 521, 522

- Akbar (son of Aurangzeb), 487
 Akmal, 140
 Alamgir, 295, 296, 329, 355, 358
 Alam Khan Lodi, 4, 5, 14, 22, 34,
 57, 74, 153
 Alauddin, 21, 72, 79, 103, 107, 178,
 219
 Alauddin Ahmad, 153
 Alauddin Hussain Shah (Sultan), 222
 Ala-ul-khan-Sur, 9, 56
 Ali Adilshah, 156, 165, 178, 180
 Ali Adilshah II, 176, 179
 Ali Akbar, 84
 Ali Ganhar, 358
 Aligarh, 342
 Ali Khan (Raja), 154, 156-159
 Alim Ali, 303
 Ali Mardan, 145, 398
 Ali Muhammad Rohila, 343, 344
 Ali Nagni, 281
 Ali (Prince), 157
 Ali Qali Khan-i-Zaman, 239, 333, 397
 Ali Qaili Shaibani, 91-95
 Alivardi Khan, 234, 324, 325, 340,
 Allahabad, 61, 110, 205, 261-263
 266, 270, 287, 294, 342, 389, 408,
 427, 465, 470, 493, 514-516, 522
 Alwar, 26
 Amar Das, 248, 249
 Amar Singh, 112, 278, 290, 328, 375
 Amarkot, 84
 Ambaji Pant Purandarc, 301, 310,
 316
 Ambala, 66, 256
 Amber, 89, 103, 106, 113, 114, 213,
 233, 237, 290, 294, 315, 362
 Amin Khan, 294, 345
 Aminuddin, 156
 Amir Khan, 141
 Amit Rao Kadambande, 298
 Amjhara, 315, 316
 Amritsar, 516
 Angad, 248, 249
 Anandpur, 254
 Anand Rao, 210
 Ankola, 208
 Annaji Datto, 213, 427, 436
 Annaji Pant, 396
 Antaji Manekeshwar, 357
 Aqa Riza, 511
 Arabia, 498
 Arakan, 221, 226, 227
 Arkot, 312
 Arjumand Banu, 267
 Arjun, 249-250, 252, 464
 Arni, 208
 Asad Khan, 289, 292, 338, 387
 Asaf Jah, 231, 326, 336, 340
 Asaf Khan, 111-112, 132, 163, 170,
 189, 263, 267, 269, 334-337, 379,
 380, 401, 479, 492
 Ashraf, 347
 Asirgarh, 154, 158-161, 165, 269,
 294, 326, 409
 Askari, 26, 34, 35, 42-52, 86
 Askaran, Rawal, 114
 Asoka, 451
 Assam, 221-222, 226, 227, 229, 390
 Asur, 224
 Attock, 79, 140, 328, 349
 Aurangabad, 172, 180, 190, 217, 218,
 287, 312, 326, 390, 392, 409
 Aurangzeb, 18, 20, 101-103, 112-114,
 139-141, 146, 150, 164, 168, 171-
 179, 182-185, 190, 198, 202-204,
 208-209, 211-215, 217-219, 224,
 226, 228, 231, 236-237, 239-241,
 243-245, 247, 250-252, 254-269-
 286, 290, 292, 293, 297, 300, 302,
 322, 331, 332, 337, 338, 340, 344,
 362-368, 371-378, 387-388, 390,
 395, 397, 398, 403, 406-408, 413-
 414, 416-419, 433, 435, 436, 443-
 447, 467-471, 475, 478, 482, 486,
 487, 492, 495, 501, 502, 505-506,
 509, 513, 516-521
 Autar Khan, 146
 Awadh, 8, 287, 294-296, 318, 327,
 328, 341-344, 352, 356, 358, 359,
 427
 Ayodhya, 23, 470, 513
 Azam Khan, 170, 286-290, 297-298,
 303, 338, 395
 Azam (Prince), 183, 243
 Azam Humayun II, 26
 Azim, 286, 288-292, 340
 Aziz Koka, 112, 130-131, 260, 263,
 401
 Azizuddin, 295
- B
- Babaji Abji, 386
 Babaji Bhonsle, 193
 Babar (Zahiruddin Muhammad), 4-
 12, 14-18, 20-22, 24-26, 30-32,
 35, 42, 44, 48, 51-52, 86, 88, 90,
 93, 104, 126, 134, 136, 139, 147,
 150, 227, 250, 296, 359-361, 366,
 410, 418, 428, 451, 505-506, 509-
 510, 513, 516, 519
 Babuji Nayak Joshi, 321, 324
 Badakhshan, 3, 10-11, 15, 25, 43, 49-
 50, 88, 90, 134-136, 147-150, 227,
 273, 390, 452
 Badan Singh, 234, 246
 Badaoni, Abdul Qadir, 142, 403, 450,
 452, 455-457, 459, 462-463, 480,
 502, 504-506
 Badaun, 343
 Baghelkhand, 103, 337
 Baglana, 207, 298, 326
 Bahadur Khan, 180-181, 206-207, 238,
 337

- Bahadur Khan Uzbeg, 116, 333-334
 Bahadurpur, 276
 Bahadur Shah (Gujerati), 25, 27, 33-36, 45, 51, 59, 153-155, 232, 361
 Bahadur Shah (Emperor) 113, 126-127, 240, 244, 256, 289-292, 296-299, 303, 379-380, 391
 Bahadur Shah II, 233
 Bahirji Nayak Jadhav, 411
 Bahiro Pant, 299, 301
 Bahlul Khan, 180
 Bahlul Lodi, 3-4, 27-28, 40, 54
 Bahraich, 39
 Baiju Baora 517
 Bairam Khan, 46-52, 84, 87, 89-100, 116, 119, 136-137, 333, 379, 452, 480
 Bajirao, 306, 308-321, 323, 325, 328-329, 338, 350, 361
 Bajirao Jedhe, 196
 Bakhta Buland, 190
 Bakhtawar Singh, 466
 Balaghat, 163, 165, 168, 180, 203, 312
 Balaji Bajirao, 310, 318 319, 414
 Balaji Vishwanath, 299-309, 313, 318, 319, 321-322, 324-325, 327-329
 Balban, 72, 79, 135
 Bali Narayan, 223-224
 Balkh, 15, 49-50, 90, 145, 150, 227, 273, 390
 Balkrishna Hanumante, 196
 Baluchistan, 134, 142, 150
 Bamiyan, 149
 Banda Bahadur, 255-256, 447, 522
 Bangalore, 194-196
 Banswara, 67, 113, 315
 Bappa Rawal, 362
 Baqi Billah, Khwaja, 486
 Baramati 197, 209
 Barcilly, 343
 Bargaon, 209
 Bari Saheba, 176, 199
 Barmzid Gur, 41-43, 65
 Baroda, 128, 130, 497
 Basawan, 511
 Bassein, 320, 413
 Basu Raja, 112
 Bayana, 5-6, 14-15, 34, 61, 64, 495
 Bayazid Kirrani, 120
 Baz Bahadur, 50, 108, 116-118, 153, 516
 Bedar Bakht, 287-288
 Belary, 207
 Belgaum, 190, 396
 Benares, 8, 37, 39-40, 95, 110, 120, 205, 275-276, 304, 465-466, 470, 493, 495-497, 510
 Bengal, 8, 9, 25, 31, 35-40, 44-45, 50, 62, 71, 73, 79-80, 82, 88, 100-101, 116, 118-122, 124, 137-138, 159, 203, 221-224, 226-227, 234, 262, 264-265, 272, 276, 282, 287-289, 327, 334-335, 340, 344, 346, 355, 389-392, 395, 397, 407-408, 414, 428, 432, 470, 483, 494, 496-497, 501, 509
 Berar, 100, 152-153, 161-162, 205-206, 277, 279, 287, 298, 305, 312, 390
 Bhagwan Das, Raja, 110, 113-114, 130, 142, 148, 237, 263, 414, 476, 480
 Bhakkar, 43
 Bhan, 357
 Bhanu Chandra Upadhyay, 457
 Bharat, Raja, 239
 Bharapur, 234, 246
 Bharna Raja, 106, 113-114
 Bhaskar Rama, 324
 Bhata, 61, 517
 Bhilsa, 57, 59
 Bhimnath, 494
 Bhira, 20
 Bhopal, 317
 Bhupat, 58
 Bhushan, 508
 Biban, 8, 26
 Bidar, 34, 152, 177, 181, 190, 287, 326, 390
 Bihar, 5, 8-9, 15, 26, 30-32, 35-36, 38, 40, 44-45, 62, 73, 88, 95, 100, 116, 118, 121, 123-124, 137-138, 189, 234, 261, 276, 282, 287-288, 295, 327, 334, 340-342, 389, 427, 483, 495
 Bihari, 508
 Bihzar, 510
 Bijapur, 102, 152-153, 156-158, 196, 198-199, 202-207, 212, 214-217, 228, 276, 285, 287, 326, 362, 390, 409, 516
 Bijnor, 343
 Bikaner, 59-60, 103, 106, 110, 114, 237, 245
 Bikramajit, 7
 Bikrampur, 122
 Bilas, 517
 Bilgram, 41, 44, 48, 62, 80, 84, 90, 99
 Birbal, Raja, 457, 462, 480, 508
 Bishandas, 144, 511
 Bokhara, 3, 11, 15, 147, 150, 227
 Bolan, 55
 Bombay, 234
 Brahman, 506
 Brindaban, 464, 516
 Broach, 128, 130-131, 497
 Bundelkhand, 52, 71, 103, 189, 239-240, 316-317, 320-321, 327, 329, 337, 339, 344
 Bundi, 113, 236, 315, 356
 Burdwan, 121, 324

- Burhan (Gujerati), 127
 Burhan I, 156-157
 Burhan II, 155-157
 Burhanpur, 152, 154, 158-159, 164,
 166-167, 287, 313, 486, 497
 Burhan-ul-mulk Saadat Khan, 341
 Burma, 221, 224, 226, 229
 Bussy, 326, 414
 Buxar, 8
- C
- Calicut, 19
 Caliphate, 502
 Cambay, 128, 466, 500-501
 Carnatic, 207-208, 212, 216, 234,
 326, 338, 395, 495
 Chaghtai, 1-2, 42
 Chaitanya, 449, 483, 487, 509
 Chakan, 182, 194, 197, 202, 205
 Chakradhar, 191
 Chakradhwaja, 226
 Champaner, 34-35, 128
 Champat Ray Bundela, 239-240, 279,
 383
 Chanda, 190, 324
 Chand Bibi, 156-158, 165
 Chanderi, 7-8, 15, 32, 57, 59, 104
 Chandradip, 122
 Chandra Deb Rama, 123
 Chandragupta Maurya, 193
 Chandragupta Vikramaditya, 107
 Chandra Narayan, 224
 Chandrasen, 494
 Chandrasen Jadav, 299-301
 Chandrasen Rao, 103, 110, 113
 Changez Khan, 1-2, 450-451
 Changez Khan (Gujerati), 128, 130
 Chaturbhuj, 57
 Chatr Khan, 517
 Chaul, 320
 Chauragarh, 189, 238-239
 Chausa, 8, 40-41, 44-45, 48, 62, 80, 84
 Chhabila Ram Nagar, 294
 Chatrasal, 240, 283, 316, 522
 Chhulramau 118
 China, 224, 497, 510
 Chimnaji Appa, 310, 313, 316-318,
 320-321, 325
 Chinnaji Damodar, 298
 Chinqilich, 287, 338
 Chintamani, 466, 508
 Chiplun, 412
 Chitor, 79, 108-112
 Chittagon, 226, 227, 229
 Chunar, 8-9, 26-7, 32-33, 37-39,
 65, 70, 95, 408, 495
 Churaman, 246, 52, 2
- D
- Dabhade, 318, 319
 Dabir, 196
 Dacca, 247, 249
 Dadrah, 27, 30, 36, 43
 Dadu, 483, 487, 507
 Dalpat Bundela (Rao), 288
 Dalpat Rai, 465
 Dalpat Singh, 237
 Damaji, 319
 Daman, 128, 190, 208, 320
 Danichand, 249
 Daniyal, 156, 158, 161, 165, 260, 261,
 269
 Dara, 146, 172-177, 179, 183, 228,
 250, 269-271, 273-284, 366, 373,
 387, 388, 466, 468, 470, 476, 480,
 486
 Darang, 226
 Darmat, 276, 280, 283
 Darya-Khan, 57, 74
 Dashwandh Singh, 257
 Dashwant, 511
 Dastur Mcherji Rana, 457
 Dattaji Sindhia, 328, 354, 355
 Dattaji Trimbak, 396
 Dand (Kirrani), 120, 123, 148, 414
 Daud Khan, 206, 293, 303, 338
 Daulatabad, 169, 186, 193, 300, 313,
 326, 390, 409
 Daulat Khan, 14, 22, 25, 29, 45
 Dawar Bakhsh, 269
 Dayanur, 90
 Dayaram Bahadur, 316
 Debi Pandit, 457
 Delhi, 1, 3-5, 8, 9, 13-18, 25, 34, 35,
 39, 42-45, 48, 50, 52, 54, 59, 65,
 66, 70-72, 79, 82, 87-94, 98, 99,
 103, 104, 116, 126, 153, 154, 175,
 179, 182, 188, 192, 211, 213, 217,
 222, 227, 241, 246, 274, 280, 281,
 287, 289, 292, 305, 309, 311, 313,
 318, 320, 322, 325, 326, 328, 329,
 342, 344, 348, 349-351, 353-356,
 358, 359, 361, 362, 363, 365, 379,
 389, 395, 409, 417, 427, 437, 451,
 453, 473, 495, 496, 502, 506, 508,
 514, 515, 519, 520, 522
 Deogarh, 189, 190
 Deoria, 281, 283
 Desha, 198
 Devagiri, 188
 Deva, 508
 Devi Singh, 239
 Dhanaji Jadhava, 216, 218, 299, 300,
 301, 302
 Dhandhuka, 128
 Dhar, 57, 74, 310, 316, 517
 Dharma Singh, 257
 Dharwar, 168, 396,
 Dholka, 128
 Dholpur, 6, 9, 14, 108, 268, 279
 Dig, 246
 Dighe, 312

- Dilawar Khan (Lodi), 5, 13, 36, 37,
 39, 65
 Diler Khan, 181, 183, 190, 206, 207,
 337
 Dildar Begam, 84
 Dilras Banu Begam, 286
 Din Panah, 289
 Dipa Bai, 207
 Dip Singh, 257, 317
 Din, 34, 127, 320
 Doab, 342
 Dost Ali, 324, 325
 Dadu, 8, 31
 Dungarpur, 113-114, 315
 Durgabhan, 239
 Durga Das (Rathor), 14, 113, 213,
 241, 242, 243, 244
 Durga Rao, 236
 Durgawati (Rani), 107, 189, 364
 Durjan Sal, 239
 Dwar Samudra, 188
 E
 Egypt, 498, 500
 Eknath, 191
 Ekoji, 207
 England, 438, 520
 Etawah, 6, 342
 Etmad Khan, 127-130, 428
 Etmad-ud-daula, 387
 F
 Faizi, 156, 462, 511, 514
 Farghana, 3-4, 21, 259
 Farhad Khan, 227
 Farrukhabad, 328, 342
 Farrukh Beg, 511
 Farrukh Siyar, 240, 246, 256, 291
 294, 304-305, 309, 338, 340, 342,
 345
 Farid Khan (See Shēr Shah)
 Farid Khan Nuhanī, 9
 Fateh Khan Jang, 56, 74
 Fateh Khan, 168-170, 194
 Fatehpur Sikri, 129, 511, 514
 Fateh Singh, 254
 Fateh Singh Bhonsle, 310-311, 314
 Firūzgarh, 66
 Firoz Jang, 287
 Firuz Shah (Bengali), 36, 50
 Firuz Sur, 68, 70, 72
 Firuz Tughluq, 152, 222, 444, 504
 France, 501, 520
 G
 Gamaji Naik, 196
 Gang, 508
 Garh Katanga, 189
 Gauhati, 224-226
 Gaur, 37-39
 Gaya, 205, 328, 493
 Ghani Khan, 136
 Ghazi Khan, 509
 Ghazi Khan Badakhshi, 459
 Ghazi Mahalli, 64
 Ghazipur, 6
 Ghaziuddin, 295
 Ghaziuddin II, 328
 Ghaziuddin Firuz Jang, 392
 Ghazni, 3, 4, 15, 49, 68, 87, 134-135,
 139, 233, 348, 352
 Ghiyas Beg, 267
 Ghiyasuddin Bahadur, 119, 222
 Ghiyasuddin Iwaz, 222
 Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, 72
 Ghizali, 505
 Ghor, 27
 Girdhar Bahadur, 294, 299, 316
 Goa, 320
 Goganda, 111
 Gokul, 353, 464, 516
 Gokul Jat, 245
 Gokulnath, 483
 Golkunda, 102, 152-153, 156-157, 162,
 164, 168, 171, 174, 175, 179, 181,
 185, 186, 198, 207, 214-216, 218,
 228, 239, 276, 285, 362, 390, 409,
 497, 502, 516
 Gondia, 190
 Gondwana, 110, 153, 156, 189, 269,
 303, 305, 334
 Gopinath, 202
 Gorakhpur, 8
 Govardhan, 511
 Govind Ballal, 355
 Govindrao, 310
 Govind Singh, Guru, 231, 248, 252,
 254-255, 471, 522
 Govind Swami, 517
 Gujerat, 25, 27, 34-36, 43-45, 51,
 57, 59, 95, 100-101, 117-118, 121,
 126-131, 133, 152-153, 155-157,
 163, 232, 234, 243, 245, 269-270,
 273, 277, 281, 283, 287-288, 295,
 311-312, 315, 318-320, 321, 324,
 329, 334, 338-339, 344, 387, 389,
 391, 395, 397, 428, 432, 433, 361,
 465, 470, 494, 497, 500-502, 522
 Gulbarga, 181
 Gurdaspur, 256
 Gutti, 312
 Gwalior, 5-6, 10, 14-15, 34, 42, 57,
 65-66, 68-69, 88, 92, 95, 100, 108,
 111, 116, 169, 245, 278, 281-282,
 287-288, 409, 446, 486, 516-517
 H
 Hafiz Rahmat Khan, 344, 356
 Haibat Khan Niyazi, 41, 43, 55, 56
 65-67, 74, 81, 118
 Haibat Rao Nimbalkar, 298
 Haidar Ali, 234, 375

- Haidar Mirza Dughlat, 11, 42, 43,
 49, 50, 55, 56, 66, 69
 Haji Ibrahim Sarhindi, 455, 505
 Haji Khan, 57, 74, 95
 Hajipur, 28
 Hakim Abdul Fatch, 139
 Hakim Alimuddin, 494
 Hakim Daud, 494
 Hakim Hassu, 494
 Hakim Humam, 494
 Hakim Mirza, 88, 109, 120, 137
 Hakim Sudra, 494
 Haldi ghati, 113
 Hamdan, 90
 Hamida Banu Begam, 47, 84-87, 96,
 261-263, 267, 364
 Hamid Khan, 105
 Hamid Khan (Gujrati), 128
 Hamza, 517
 Hardoi, 343
 Hardwar, 493, 516
 Hargovind, 250
 Harichandan Mukund Deva (Raja),
 120
 Haridas, 449
 Harkishan, 250
 Harnand Arora (Raja), 343
 Har Ray, 250, 252
 Har Ray Ramal, 110, 114
 Hasan, 27, 28, 152, 153
 Hasan (Ali), 291, 292
 Hasan Khan (Mewati), 5, 6, 27
 Hasan Khan Sarwani, 56, 60
 Hazarat-i-Ala, 35
 Hemadri, 191
 Hemu, 88-90, 92-95, 118, 119, 333,
 375, 397, 522
 Herat, 3, 46
 Hindal, 25, 26, 39, 42-45, 48, 50, 84
 87
 Hindu Beg, 27, 33-36, 44
 Hirabai, 372
 Hirji, 205
 Hirvijaya Suri, 457
 Hisar, 15, 267
 Hisar Firuza, 11, 26, 27, 48, 270
 Hiuen Tsang, 191
 Holland, 522
 Holkar 323
 Humayun, Nasiruddin Muhammad,
 8-12, 15, 16, 24-27, 30, 32-50,
 52-57, 59, 61, 66, 68-71, 84-91,
 95, 99, 104, 119, 126, 135, 136,
 139, 142, 146, 147, 153, 155, 227,
 259, 333, 360, 361, 366, 416, 418,
 428, 451, 505, 510, 513, 516
 Husain Ali, 338
 Husain Ali (Sayad) 291-294, 304, 305
 Husain Beg, 264
 Husain Khan Jalwani, 41
 Husain Mirza 130, 142, 145
 Husain Nizamshah, 168, 169
 Hushang, Sultan, 152
 Hyderabad, 166, 175, 185, 207, 216,
 217, 234, 287, 305, 311, 312, 317
 340, 344, 390
 I
 Ibn Hasan, 227
 Ibrahim Adilshah, 165-166, 169
 Ibrahim Hussain Mirza, 129-130
 Ibrahim Khan Gardi, 326, 357, 362
 Ibrahim Lodi 4-5, 11, 14, 22, 29,
 64, 70-71, 104, 126, 507
 Ibrahim Shah, 50
 Ibrahim Sur, 27-28, 32, 94, 99, 116
 Ikhlash Khan, 156
 Ikhtiyaruddin Muhammad Khilji, 222
 Ikhtiyar-ul-mulk-habshi, 131
 Ilkhans, 2
 Ilutmish, 135
 Iman Quli, 148-149
 Inayat Khan, 506
 Indapur, 194
 Indore, 310
 Indra Singh, 241
 Intzamuddaula, 295
 Iqbal Khan, 68
 Irvine, 293
 Isa Khan Niyazi, 26, 63-64, 223
 Isakhan Sarwani, 40-42
 Isa Khan Nuhani, 123
 Isan Bugha, 3
 Ishwari Singh, 327
 Iskandar Khan, 92-94
 Islam Khan, 392
 Islam Quli, 239
 Islam Shah Sur, 33, 37, 40-42, 50-53,
 55, 61-64, 66, 68-72, 78, 81-82,
 88, 104, 126, 428, 444, 517, 522
 Ismail, 155
 Ispahan, 347
 Italy, 501
 J
 Jafar Khan, 275
 Jagannath Pandit, 361, 466, 511
 Jagannath (Musician), 517
 Jag Raj, 239
 Jagat Singh (Rana), 112, 237
 Jahanara, 173, 175, 205, 364, 466,
 476-477, 479, 505
 Jahandarshah, 256, 289, 291-293, 295,
 338, 342, 344, 478, 517
 Jahangir, 85, 102, 106, 112, 114, 162-
 165, 167, 169, 182, 194, 219, 223,
 231, 236-237, 250, 260-267, 269-
 272, 332, 334-336, 362, 364, 366-
 368, 387-388, 390, 392, 401, 414,
 416, 418-419, 432, 434, 443, 446-
 447, 463-466, 469, 479, 486-487,

- 494-495, 502, 505-506, 511-512, 514, 517-518
 Jahangir Quli, 39, 40
 Jahangir Mirza, 259
 Jahangir dad, 517
 Jahan Khan, 353-355
 Jahan Shah, 289, 291, 294
 Jaimal, 108-109
 Jaipur, 59, 246, 516
 Jaisalmer, 43, 52, 89, 103, 106, 110, 114, 237
 Jaita, 60
 Jaitpur, 240
 Jajmau, 117, 43
 Jalalabad, 348
 Jalal Khan (Jabvani), 61, 63-65
 Jalal Khan (Jalu), 41
 Jalal Khan (Prince), *See* Islam Shah
 Jalal Khan Niyazi, 65
 Jalaluddin (Nuhani) 8, 9, 25, 30, 31
 Jalaluddin Khilzi, 135
 Jalandhar, 92, 256, 353
 Jamal Khan, 27-28
 Jammu, 353
 Jamrud, 287, 408
 Jani Beg Arghun, 142
 Janjira, 204, 208, 214, 300, 301, 320, 408, 413
 Jankoji Sindhia, 355, 357
 Japan, 288, 497, 500
 Jassa Singh Kalal, 257
 Jaswant Rao Pawar, 357
 Jaswant Singh, 113-114, 141, 209, 240-241, 252, 277-279, 282-283, 408, 447, 466
 Jaunpur, 6, 27-28, 38-40, 82, 94-95, 118-120, 137, 201, 333, 397
 Javali, 193, 197
 Jawahar, 206
 Jay Bahadur, 46
 Jayadhwaja, 224-226
 Jayappa, 327
 Jaya Ram Swami, 209
 Jay Singh (Sawai Raja), 114, 233, 246-247, 325, 327-328, 338, 374, 480
 Jay Singh (Mirza), 114, 179-180, 183, 203, 205, 209, 240, 271, 276, 283, 290, 294, 306, 315, 317, 366, 374, 398, 447, 480, 506
 Jay Singh (Rana), 113, 242-243, 252
 Jessor, 122, 223
 Jharkhand, 153
 Jhabua, 315
 Jhansi, 316, 327
 Jhusi, 118
 Jiya Bai, 193-195, 199-200, 205, 364
 Jiji Anaga, 86, 96
 Jinji, 208, 217-218 338
 Jiva, 483
 Jiva Mahal, 201, 201
 Jnaneswar, 191
 Jodh Bai, 237, 266, (Jagat Gosain).
 Jodhpur 79, 236-237, 240-241, 245, 290, 293-294
 Jotyaji, Kesarkar, 298
 Jujhar Khan, 128-129, 131, 140
 Jujhar Sing, 171, 189, 238-239, 272, 332, 465-466
 Juji, 1
 Junagarh, 128, 129
 Junaid Barlas, 6, 26, 30, 32, 35-36
 Junnar, 194
 K.
 Kabir, 449, 487
 Kabul, 3-4, 12, 14-16, 21, 26, 39, 43, 45, 49-50, 52, 68, 86-88, 90, 93, 98, 134-137, 141, 145, 147, 150, 259, 265, 270, 272, 286-287, 289, 295, 345-349, 352, 389-390, 395, 407-409, 510
 Kabul (Mangol) 1
 Kachi Chak, 56
 Kahlur, 254
 Kaithal, 255
 Kajuli, 1, 225
 Kalanaur, 87, 90
 Kalinjar, 26, 32-34, 48, 61-63, 110, 113, 408
 Kalpi, 5, 6, 41, 117-118, 261, 316, 333
 Kalyani, 181
 Kalyanmal, Raja, 69, 110, 114, 202, 237
 Kam Baksh, 217, 219, 256, 286-287, 289-290, 296-297
 Kamil Khan, 149
 Kampli, 188
 Kamran, 7, 15, 26, 39, 41, 43-45, 47-50, 52, 55, 68-69, 84, 86, 90, 97, 136, 259
 Kamrup, 221-227, 229
 Kamtapur, 222
 Kanakgiri, 194-195
 Kanauj, 26, 39-40, 42, 68, 90
 Kanchi, 493
 Kandarpa Narayan, 122
 Kangra, 464
 Kanhua Singh, 257
 Kanhoji Angria, 300, 301, 319
 Kanhoji Bhonsle, 312
 Kanishka, 451
 Kanpur, 342
 Kanthaji Kadambade, 316, 318, 319
 Kapur Singh, 257
 Karachar, 1
 Kara Mainkpur, 333-334
 Karan Singh, 112
 Karma Singh, 257
 Karnal, 341, 349-350
 Karnawati, Rani, 34

- Karwar, 190, 208
 Kashi. (*See* Benares)
 Kashiramdas, 509
 Kashmir, 43, 48, 68-69, 100, 134, 141-142, 148, 150, 227, 233, 250, 251, 254, 274, 285, 349, 352, 353, 360, 389-390, 428, 450, 454, 465, 480, 486, 495, 497, 502, 512, 517
 Kasturi Ranga, 200
 Katihar, 343
 Kaurchik, 2
 Kavi Kalash, 213, 215, 388, 471, 522
 Kavindracharya, 466, 508
 Kedar Ray, 122
 Kesh, 1
 Keshava (Painter), 511
 Keshavdas, 508
 Khajuhā, 282, 291
 Khalifa, 44
 Khalilullah Khan, 185
 Khande Balal, 299, 305, 310
 Khande Rao Dabhade, 302
 Khandesh, 34, 100, 102, 128, 152-154, 156, 158-161, 163, 194, 206-207, 261, 269, 287, 294, 298, 305, 313, 326, 417, 430
 Khan-i-Alam, 144, 288
 Khan-i-Azam, 130, 163
 Khan-i-Dauran, 140, 169, 325, 338, 346, 349-350
 Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, 122, 163, 168, 183, 185, 336-337, 447, 455
 Khan-i-Khanan, 163, 172, 332
 Khan-i-Qalan, 129, 131
 Khan-i-Zaman, 334
 Khan Muhammad, 200
 Khannua, 11, 12, 15, 43, 68, 410
 Khanzada Begam, 12, 86
 Khawas Khan, 41-43, 50, 56, 60-61, 63-65, 67, 70-71, 74, 81, 170, 180-181
 Kheloji, 168
 Khirki, 164, 172
 Khizr Khan, 40, 73, 119
 Khizr Khwaja, 2
 Khorasan, 3, 149, 347
 Khujista Akhtar (*See* Jahan Bahadur)
 Khumbalner, 111
 Khurda, 123
 Khurramdad, 517
 Khushab, 55
 Khushhal Khan Khatak, 140-141
 Khusrāu, 112, 162, 237, 249, 261-267, 281, 325, 365-366, 464
 Khwaja Abbas Bamad, 510-511
 Khwaja Abdur-Rahim, 149
 Khwaja Kamgar, 506
 Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti, 260, 452
 K. hawaspur Tanda, 28
 Ki pchak, 1, 3
 Kirti Singh Chandel, 61, 63
 Kolaba, 190
 Kolhapur, 202, 300-301, 305, 306, 309, 311, 315, 322, 396
 Konch, 316
 Kondadeva, 195-196
 Konkani, 243, 320-321, 396, 437
 Kopāl, 207
 Kosala, 107
 Kota, 236, 315
 Kriparam Gaur, 238
 Krishnadas Kaviraj, 509
 Krishna garh, 236
 Krishna ji Bhaskar, 199, 202
 Krishna Singh, 236
 Krittivasa, 509
 Kuch Bihar, 118, 120, 221-223, 225-226, 229
 Kuhram, 255
 Kumaon, 65, 67, 343, 497
 Kunpa, 60
 Kurukshetra, 328
 L
 Lodli Begam, 268
 Lad Malka, 32
 Lagir, 141
 Lahore, 16, 26, 41-44, 48, 50, 52, 71, 79, 138, 148, 264, 265, 271, 281, 282, 287, 288, 328, 349, 352, to 355, 389, 409, 427, 462, 473, 480, 497, 514
 Lakhji Jadhav Rao, 193
 Lakhnauti, 57
 Lakshmi Narayan, 222, 223
 Lal-khan, 517
 Lal Kumari, 291, 345, 478, 517
 Lambarani, 298
 Lamghan, 26, 50
 Lodi Khan, 121
 Loh garh, 256
 Lucknow, 26, 27, 40, 43, 95, 119, 120, 333, 397, 508
 Ludhiana, 256
 M
 Maaruf Farmuli, 58
 Maasir-ul-Umara, 337
 Mabār, 188
 Machchhiwara, 256
 Madanna Pandit, 184, 185, 186, 192, 207, 209
 Madan Singh, 257, 298
 Madhava, 327
 Madhawa Singh, 236
 Madhawa Vidyaranya, 188
 Madhya Bharat, 100
 Madhya Pradesh, 234
 Madura, 188
 Magadha, 107, 119
 Mahaban, 353

- Mahabat Khan, 112, 140, 141, 184
 186, 192, 206, 238, 269, 334-336
 Maham Ynaga, 86, 96, 117, 364
 Maham Begam, 9
 Maharashtra, 179, 190-192, 195, 196
 201, 204, 205, 207-214, 215-218,
 306, 329, 361, 411, 413, 430, 437
 Mah Chuchak Begam, 136
 Mahdi Khwaja, 12, 24, 25, 44
 Mahe, 128, 318
 Mahendra, 247
 Mahewa, 239
 Mahmud, 347
 Mahmud Khan, 63, 65
 Mahmud Lodi, 5, 6, 8, 9, 25-27
 Mahmud Mirza, 3
 Mahmud of Ghazni, 359
 Mahmud Shah, 36, 37
 Mahmud Shah III, 127
 Makhdum Alam, 31
 Makhu, 517
 Makran, 134, 150
 Maldeva Rao, 44, 55, 59-61, 89, 103,
 104, 110, 113, 116
 Malhar Rao Holkar, 310, 316, 327,
 328, 354, 355, 522
 Malik Ahmad, 152
 Malik Ambar, 161-168, 171-173, 192,
 194, 219, 232, 268-270, 427, 434-
 436
 Malik Bhagwan, 74
 Malik Imam, 456
 Malik Muhammad Jayasi, 507
 Malik Raju, 161
 Mallu Khan, 56
 Maloji, 168, 193, 194
 Malukdas, 483, 487
 Malwa, 7, 25, 33-36, 40, 44, 50, 56-
 58, 62, 65-67, 71, 74, 76, 82, 88,
 95, 100, 101, 117, 118, 120, 124,
 153, 156, 167, 189, 269, 276, 277,
 282, 286, 287, 289, 294, 295, 298,
 311, 312, 315-321, 327-329, 333-339,
 342, 344, 389, 428, 495, 502, 516
 Manaji, 319
 Manbai, 237, 262, 263
 Mandisor, 34, 153
 Mandu, 56, 79, 153, 154, 164, 317
 Mangarh, 66
 Manjanu Khan, 110
 Mankot, 66, 68, 70, 95
 Manohar, 511
 Man Singh Kachhwaha, Raja, 110,
 111, 114, 123, 129, 138, 148, 163,
 223, 260, 261, 263, 264, 368, 374,
 477, 480
 Man Singh More, 302
 Mansur, 387, 511
 Marwar, 103, 106, 108, 110, 112,
 113, 114, 241, 243, 244
 Mashad, 46
 Mastani, 316, 321
 Masud, 181
 Masulipattam, 166
 Masuma Sultan Begam, 25
 Mathura, 245, 247, 315, 353, 464,
 470, 516
 Matiram, 508
 Man, 497
 Maulana Shah Muhammad Shaħa-
 badi, 505
 Mawar-un-nahr, 1, 2, 3
 Mecca, 46, 50, 52, 69, 98, 337, 360,
 447, 455, 466, 512
 Medina, 360
 Medini Rai, 7, 15, 104
 Merta, 59, 60, 108
 Mesopotamia,
 Mewar, 45, 51, 52, 59, 67, 89, 103,
 104, 108-112, 114, 117, 132, 153,
 162, 193, 233, 242, 261, 262, 265,
 266, 268, 270, 290, 327, 353, 362
 Mewat, 5, 61, 64, 65, 88, 95, 108, 116
 Mia Ahmed Sarwani, 60
 Mian Mi, 486
 Midnapur, 121
 Mihtar Khan, 146
 Mirabai, 508
 Mir Ali Shukra Beg Bahadur, 90
 Miran Bahadur Shah 158-161
 Miran Muhammad Shah I, 153
 Miran Shah, 3
 Mir Habib, 324
 Mir Jumla, 174-177, 183, 198, 224-
 226, 293, 271, 275, 276, 282, 407,
 491
 Mir Mohsin Razi, 155
 Mir Muhammad Amin, 156, 165
 Mir Munir, 156
 Mir Sayyad Ali, 510, 511
 Mirza Abul Qasim, 90, 97
 Mirza Ghazi, 143
 Mirza Hakim, 87-89, 91, 136-138,
 333
 Mirza Husain Baiqara, 3
 Mirza Janjanaan Mazhar, 486
 Mirza, Mir, 156
 Mirza Shah Rukh, 147, 158, 401
 Mirza Sulaiman, 11, 25, 49, 88, 91
 Miyan Manjhu, 157
 Mohan Singh, 298
 Mohsin Fani, 460, 507
 Monghyr, 39, 276
 Moradabad, 343
 Moro Trimbak Pingle, 200, 206, 210,
 396
 Moti Shah, 156
 Muazzam, 203, 205, 206, 240, 254,
 276, 285-288, 362, 487
 Mubarak Khan, 57, 74, 153

- Mubarak Shah II, 153, 154
 Mubariz Khan 50, 68, 338, 339
 Mudhol, 193
 Mughalistan, 2, 3
 Mughisuddin, 222
 Mughlani Begam, 353, 419
 Muhammad, 258, 512
 Muhammad Adil Sah, 50, 70, 116, 118, 169, 175, 176, 178
 Muhammad Amin, 174, 175, 292, 341
 Muhammad Azim, 289
 (See Azim-us-shan)
 Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, 62, 72, 79, 135, 222, 447
 Muhammad Farnuli, 5
 Muhammad Hashim, 433
 Muhammad Husain Mirza, 129, 130, 131
 Muhammad Khan Bagash, 316, 317, 342
 Muhammad Khan Sur, 30, 118
 Muhammad Masum, Khwaja, 486
 Muhammad Mohsin, 443
 Muhammad Nadir, 511
 Muhammad Qasim Farista, 506
 Muhammad Qasim Khan, 95
 Muhammad Quli Qutbshah, 167, 171
 Muhammad Rija Beg, 144
 Muhammad Saleh, 506
 Muhammad Shah, (Afghan), 119, 140, 152, 153
 Muhammad Shah (Emperor), 233, 240, 246, 294, 295, 325, 327, 338, 340-342, 349, 350, 353, 360, 478
 Muhammad Shah, Nuhani, 5, 6, 8, 9, 30, 31
 Muhammad Shah III, (Gujrati), 127
 Muhammad Sultan Mirza, 26, 34, 37, 41, 44, 128, 129, 175
 Muhammad Sur, 27
 Muhammad Zaman Mirza, 25, 33, 34, 40, 44
 Muin Khan, 57, 352
 Muizuddin Muhammad, 135, 287, 289
 Mukammal Khan Gujerati, 505
 Mulla Chalak, 140
 Mulla Muhammad Lari, 166
 Mulla Nahawandi, 506
 Mulla Pir Muhammad Khan, 95, 96
 Mulla Shah Badakhshi, 486
 Mulla Sheri, 504
 Multan, 55, 56, 74, 76, 79, 142, 270, 281, 287, 289, 295, 355, 389, 390, 427, 478, 497
 Mulukdas, 507
 Mumtaz Begum, 515
 Mungi Shivagaon, 313
 Munim Khan, 87-89, 91, 98, 120-122, 136, 287, 289, 290, 299, 333, 379
 Munir, 506
 Muqarrab Khan, 168
 Murad, 139, 149, 150, 156, 157, 158, 197, 260, 261, 270, 273, 274, 276-278, 280, 281, 283, 365
 Murari Pandit, 169, 170, 192
 Murshidabad, 342
 Murshid Quli Khan, 172, 173, 324, 340, 390, 391, 398, 427, 435, 436
 Murtaza Nizamshah II, 155, 161, 168, 337
 Musa Khan Fuladi, 128
 Mustafa, 4, 169, 170
 Mutmid Khan, 506
 Mutwakkil, 360
 Muzaffar Husain Mirza, 143, 145
 Muzaffar Jang, 325
 Muzaffar Khan, 425, 429
 Muzaffar Khan, Turbati, 121
 Muzaffar Shah, 129
 Muzaffar Shah III, (Gujerati), 128
 Mysore, 234, 303
- N
- Nabhadas, 508
 Nadir Quli, 347
 Nadir Shah Durrani, 233, 295, 318, 328, 341, 343, 347-352, 360, 419
 Nagarkot, 67
 Nagaur, 108, 116, 117
 Nagore, 34, 60
 Nagpur, 189, 190, 324
 Nagraj, 59
 Najib Khan Rohilla, 353-356, 358
 Nagibuddaula, 358
 Naldurg, 181
 Namadeva, 191
 Nanak (Guru), 248, 249, 449, 452, 487
 Nana Sahab, 321
 Nanddas, 508
 Nander, 254
 Naqub Khan, 504
 Narahari Chakravarti, 509
 Nar Narayan, 222
 Narnaul, 27
 Naroji Ram, 299
 Nasik, 168, 190
 Nasir, 152, 153
 Nasir Jang, 325
 Nasir Khan, 57
 Nasir Khan Nuhani, 5, 8, 42
 Nasir Mirza, 259
 Navadvipa, 493
 Navasari, 457
 Nazr Muhammad, 145, 148, 149, 150, 151
 Nekusiyar, 294
 Nemaji Sindhia, 298
 Nepal, 362

- Nctaji Palkar, 180, 200, 204, 210
 Niamatullah, 506
 Nilambar (Raja), 222
 Nimbalkar, 193
 Nishapur, 341, 347
 Nizam Khan, 5, 28, 326
 Nizamuddin Ahmad, 12, 506
 Nizamuddin Khalifa, 12, 13, 30
 Nizam shah, 163, 166, 167, 193, 194, 197
 Nizamul Mulk, 294, 295, 303, 304, 306, 308, 309, 311-318, 325, 338, 339, 349, 350
 Nuno-de-cunha, 126, 127
 Nurjahan, 144, 265-269, 335, 336, 364, 368, 387, 388, 479, 495, 505
 Nurmahal, *see* Nurjahan
 Nusrat Shah, 8, 9, 25, 31, 36
 O
 Oghtai, 2
 Orchha, 113, 238, 466
 Orissa, 27, 100, 116, 118, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 148, 156, 167, 189, 227, 234, 262, 269, 272, 276, 282, 287, 295, 329, 340, 341, 389, 390, 391, 397, 398, 428, 466, 470, 583
 Oudh, 234
 P
 Padmakar, 508
 Pahar Singh, 239-239
 Palkhed, 313-314, 316-317
 Pandharpur, 192
 Panhala, 202, 206, 218
 Panipat, 4-5, 7, 10, 12, 29, 40, 42-43, 93-94, 99, 104, 324, 344, 410, 513
 Panna, 65-66, 240, 315
 Parashuram Trimbak Pratinedhi, 216
 Parasuram Pant, 299-300
 Parenda, 169-170, 178, 181
 Parikshit Narayan, 223-224
 Paroji Bhonsle, 298
 Parvez, 163, 266-267, 280, 335-336
 Parvezdad, 517
 Patanj, 98, 131, 497
 Patgaon, 209
 Patna, 26, 39, 61, 121
 Persia, 2, 16, 23, 43, 46, 52, 68, 75, 86, 88-90, 95, 99, 270, 281, 286, 289-291, 347, 349, 351, 360, 379, 468, 496, 497, 500-501, 519, 512-513, 520
 Peshawar, 26, 55, 140, 348, 352, 408
 Phaltan, 193
 Pilaji (Gaikwar), 318, 319
 Pilaji Jadhav, 310, 328
 Pilibhit, 343
 Pir Muhammad, 98, 117
 Poona, 168-170, 190, 193-196, 202, 316, 314, 317, 323, 396
 Prahlad Niraji, 379
 Pran Narayan, 223-225
 Prasenjit, 107
 Pratapaditya, 122, 223
 Pratapgarrh, 200, 202
 Pratap, Maharana, 101, 107, 109-110, 112-113, 232, 335, 374, 375, 522
 Prataprao Gujar, 206, 210
 Pratap Singh, 325
 Prayag (*see* Alahabad)
 Prem Naayan, 189
 Prithwichand Raja, 249, 252-253, 271
 Punjab, 2, 4-5, 26, 34, 43-45, 48-49, 52, 55, 62, 65-66, 68-69, 71, 74, 79, 84, 87-88, 92-93, 95, 98, 100, 116, 136-138, 141, 232-233, 245, 248, 250-252, 254-257, 264-265, 270, 281, 287, 295, 328-329, 334, 343-344, 348-349, 351-352, 354-356, 358, 361, 407, 418, 452, 467-468, 494, 497, 502
 Purandar, 180, 197, 203, 313
 Puran Mal, 56-58, 74
 Puri, 493
 Pu ushottam, 457
 Pushkar, 464
 Q
 Qadir Shah, 57
 Qamaruddin, 349
 Qandahar, 4, 15, 26, 43, 45-49, 52, 68, 86, 88, 90, 91, 95, 134, 136, 144, 145-150, 162, 168, 172, 174, 227, 268-271, 274, 345, 347, 348, 357, 361, 389, 390, 409, 428, 463, 500
 Qasim Husain Sultan, 42
 Qasim Khan, 5, 142, 224, 277, 278
 Qatlu Khan Nuhani, 122, 123
 Qawamuddin, 443
 Qayamganj, 342
 Qayam Khan, 343, 344
 Qazi Fazilat, 73, 74
 Qazi Idris, 357
 Qazi Jalaluddin Muliani, 459
 Qazi Yaqub, 455
 Qazwini, 506
 Qiliz Khan, 140
 Qiya Khan Gung, 95, 323
 Quli Qutb-ul-muk-Sultan, 166
 Qutb Khan, 31, 33, 36, 40
 Qutb Khan Banct, 41, 56, 58, 63
 Qutb Khan Naib, 64, 65
 Qutb Shah, 162, 202, 206, 207, 212, 215, 375
 Qutbuddin Khan, 131
 R
 Rafi-ud-Daula, 294
 Rafi-ud-darjat, 293, 294, 305
 Rafi-ul-Qadr, 289
 Rafi-us-shan, 291, 293

- Raghudeva, 222-23
 Raghuji Bhonsle, 321, 323-25
 Raghunath Ballal Korde, 196
 Raghunath Rao, 328, 354
 Raigarh, 320
 Rai Rghunath, 466, 470
 Raisin, 57, 59
 Raja Rajrup, 283
 Raja Raju, 285
 Raja Ram, 213, 215-218, 245, 298,
 302-304, 325, 364, 374
 Raja Ram Prasad, 57
 Rajas Bai, 300
 Rajasthan, 25, 51, 59, 61, 62, 71, 74,
 76, 89, 103, 141, 181, 233, 234,
 243, 245, 283, 284, 295, 315, 318,
 320, 327, 344, 354, 362, 468, 479,
 483, 516
 Rajgarh, 198, 203
 Rajputana *see* Rajasthan
 Raj Singh Kachhwaha, 466
 Raj Singh (Rana), 112, 141, 242,
 271
 Rama chandra Baba, 323, 327
 Ramananda, 483
 Ramanuja, 482
 Rama Raja, 322, 323
 Ram Chandra, 443, 517
 Ram Chandra Bundela, 237-238
 Ram Chandra Deva (Raja), 107
 Ram Chandra Pant, 216, 217, 300
 Ramdas, 191, 209, 232, 248, 517
 Ramji Pant Bhanu, 301
 Ramnagar, 206
 Rampur, 236, 343
 Ram Ray, 250-253
 Ram Sah Tomar, 111
 Ram Singh 204, 213
 Ram Singh Hada, 288
 Ram Singh Kachhwaha, 472
 Ram Shah (Raja), 95, 108
 Randola Khan, 169, 170
 Rangoon, 227, 296
 Ranjit Singh, 257, 375
 Ranoji Sindhia, 310, 316, 327, 328
 Ranthambhor, 7, 25, 34, 57, 61, 63,
 95, 97, 108-110, 313, 116, 189, 236,
 334, 409
 Rapri, 6
 Rasik Das, 433
 Rashidgarh, 66
 Rashkhan, 506
 Ratan Chand, 294
 Ratna Singh (Rana), 33
 Raushan Akhtar, 294
 Raushanara, 281, 479
 Rawat Sujan Singh, 298
 Ray Bhani Bhonsle, 299
 Raygarh, 215-217
 Ray Ray Singh, 237
 Ray Singh, 110
 Ray Singh Sisodia, 278
 Roha, 320
 Rohilkhand, 328, 342-344
 Rohri, 27
 Rohtasgarh, 37-40, 55, 66, 269, 401
 Rumi Khan, 34, 51
 Rup, 483
 Rupmati, 116, 516
 Ruquaiya Begum, 266
 Rustam Khan, 130
 Rustam Rao Jadav, 298
 S
 Saadat Khan, 318, 325, 347
 Sabaji, 354, 355
 Sabarmati, 128
 Sadashiva Rao Bhan, 355-357
 Sadhora, 256
 Sadulla Khan, 146, 271, 344, 356,
 387, 480, 506
 Saeed Khan, 145
 Safawis, 347
 Safdar Jang, 295, 328, 341-44, 352
 Safdar Khan, 145
 Sahab-i-Jamal, 266
 Saharanpur, 256
 Sahasram, 73, 77
 Sahesram, 28
 Sahu, 215, 218
 Saibai, 195
 Said Khan, 65-67
 Saif Ali Beg, 90
 Sakharan Babu, 323, 354
 Salabat Jang, 325
 Salher, 206, 208
 Slim, 360, 365, 401, *See also* Jahangir
 and Prince Salim
 Salima Begam, 262, 364, 479
 Salimgarh, 66
 Salsette, 320
 Samadhara, 228
 Samarqand, 1-4, 9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22,
 147, 148, 150, 227
 Sambhlah, 5, 6, 11, 26, 39, 42, 43, 50,
 71, 88, 89, 91, 92, 95, 119, 334,
 397, 513
 Sambhuji, 522
 Samergarh, 280, 282, 288
 Samsher Bahadur, 357
 Sanatan, 483
 Sanger, 316
 Sangola, 324
 Sangram Singh Rana, 4-7, 9, 11, 14,
 15, 22, 59, 103, 104, 113
 Sankarji Malhar, 304
 Sansaji Ghorpade, 216, 217, 302
 Santaji Bagh, 357
 Sanwaldas, 511
 Sarang, 55
 Sarangkhan, 32

- Sarangpur, 57
 Sardesai, 299, 312, 313
 Sarfaraz Khan, 340
 Sarhind, 50, 66, 74, 87, 92, 99, 255,
 352-355, 465
 Sarmad, 486
 Satara, 190, 206, 217, 218, 299-301
 304, 317, 322, 323, 325, 396
 Satgaon, 121
 Satwas, 57
 Sabrastra, 468
 Sawantawadi, 190
 Sayyed Banda, 200
 Sayyad Farid Bokhari, 159
 Sayyad Hamid Bokhari, 129
 Sayyad Khan, 263
 Sayyad Miran Bokhari, 128
 Senapt, 508
 Shah Abbas, 144-146
 Shah Abdul Maali, 91, 137, 452
 Shah Alam, 181, 185, 285, 345, 358
 Shaham Beg, 333
 Shah Barj, 367
 Shahbaz Khan, 119
 Shah Beg, 143
 Shab Hussain Arghun, 45
 Shahjahan, 101, 102, 112, 114, 144-
 146, 149-151, 163-170, 174, 175,
 177, 178, 183, 189, 194, 197, 198,
 202, 211, 219, 223, 224, 227-229,
 231-233, 236-240, 249, 250, 255-
 269, 271-280, 334-337, 361, 364-
 367, 370-374, 377, 379, 383, 387,
 390, 394, 398, 402, 403, 414,
 417, 419, 432, 433, 435, 444, 464-
 468, 475-477, 482, 486, 487, 492,
 494, 502, 505, 506, 509, 512, 513,
 515-518
 Shahjahan III, 296
 Shahjahanabad, 515
 Shahji Bhonsle, 168-170, 177, 193-
 199, 202, 207, 325, 375
 Shah Mirza, 129-131
 Shah Nawaz Khan, 163
 Shah Nawaz Khan Safwi, 286
 Shah, Persia, 168, 171
 Shah Rukh, 3, 148
 Shahryar, 266, 268, 336
 Shah safi, 145
 Shah Tahmasp, 46, 48, 50, 68, 104,
 146, 347
 Shahu, 297-306, 308-320, 361, 364,
 374, 413
 Shah wali-ullah, 486
 Shaibani Khan, 3, 4
 Shaikh Abdul Latif, 486
 Shaikh Abdul Quddus Gongole, 486
 Shaikh Abd-un-nabi, 447
 Shaik Ahmed Sarhindi, 486, 507
 Shaikh Bayazid, 6, 8, 26
 Shaikh Burhan, 486
 Shaikh Gadai, 96, 97
 Shaikh Khalil, 40
 Shaikh Mubarak, 455, 459, 462
 Shaikh Salim Chisti, 260, 452, 486
 Shaikh Tajuddin Dehlawi, 457
 Shaikh Yaqub Kashmiri, 457
 Shakti Singh, 108, 109
 Shambeg, 96
 Shambhuji, 181, 182, 184, 185, 194,
 199, 201, 203, 204-206, 208, 213-
 216, 243, 288, 298, 305, 310, 312-
 314, 322, 338, 362, 388, 437, 447, 471
 Shambhuji II, 300, 304
 Shambhuji Kavji, 200, 201
 Shamli, 27
 Shamsabad, 7, 8, 15
 Shamsher Bahadur, 316
 Shamsuddin Khan, 86, 96, 98
 Shankaracharya of Sringeri, 188
 Shankarji Narayan Sachiva, 216
 Sharfuddin Mirza, 108, 113
 Sharza Khan, 181
 Shatruijit, 224
 Shayastakhan, 176, 179, 202, 203,
 205, 226, 227, 277
 Sher Afkan, 268
 Sher garh, 66
 Sher Shah (Khan, Sur), 8-15, 21,
 25-32, 33, 35-45, 52, 54-63, 67
 71-83, 89, 90, 99, 116, 118, 126,
 129, 232, 361, 366, 369, 375, 378,
 379, 389, 393-397, 426, 428, 442,
 491, 507, 522
 Sher Shah II, 116, 397
 Sher Khan fubdi, 129, 130
 Shia, 369
 Shia Khan-i-Zaman, 97
 Shihabuddin, 96, 98
 Shivadayaal, 483
 Shivaji, 101, 141, 178-182, 184, 193-
 213, 215-217, 228, 229, 232, 240,
 299, 300, 303, 305, 308, 309, 311,
 314, 319-322, 325, 329, 361-64,
 368, 375-377, 385-388, 395-398,
 410-415, 436-439, 522
 Shivaji II, 298, 323
 Sholapur, 170, 181, 190
 Shrihari Kaistha, 121
 Shrigat, 225
 Shripat Rao, 314
 Shuja, 170, 270, 274, 276, 282, 283,
 285, 365, 366, 407, 470
 Shujaat Khan, 10, 40, 41, 42, 57,
 65-67, 71, 74, 116, 118, 141
 Shujaudaula, 296, 342, 356
 Shujauddin, 340
 Shayam Deo, 239
 Shyamraj Nilkanth Ranjhekar, 196
 Shyam Singh, 257
 Sidi of Janjira, 376, 408, 413 (*see also*
 Janjira)

- Sikandra, 18
 Sikandar Lodi, 28, 40, 54
 Sikandar Shah (Sur), 50, 51, 71, 72, 87, 88, 92, 94, 95, 99, 116
 Sikandar Sultan (Adilshah), 181, 184, 185, 222
 Sikri, 18, 131, 454
 Sindh, 25, 43, 49, 59, 62, 84, 100, 134, 135, 142, 274, 281, 356, 358, 428, 497, 500
 Sindhia, 323
 Sindkhed, 193
 Singharh, 197, 218, 324
 Sipir Shikosh, 274
 Sirohi, 113
 Sitaram, 315
 Sonaji Pant, 196
 Sonargaon, 79, 497
 Son Island, 227
 Sonpat, 158, 255
 Sorath, 128
 Sorya Bai, 213
 Spain, 520
 Srinagar, 142, 271, 282, 493, 661
 Sringeri, 188, 493
 Subhan ouli, 150
 Sudha Singh, 257
 Surjan Singh Bundela, 278
 Sukhsen, 466, 517
 Sukkur, 497
 Sulaiman Kirrani, 118-120
 Sulaiman Mirza, 137, 147
 Sulaiman Pasha, 127
 Sulaiman Shikoh, 271, 276, 278, 282, 446, 470
 Sulaiman, Sur, 28, 30
 Sultan Ahmed Miza, 3
 Sultanam, 25
 Sultan Hazi Thaneswari, 504
 Sultan Husain Baiqara, 9, 20, 26
 Sultan Ibrahim, 54
 Sultan Jalaluddin Nuhani, 9
 Sultanji Nimbalkar, 312
 Sultan Mahmud Shah, 129, 130
 Sultan Mizuddin Muhammad, 27
 Sultan Muhammad, 282, 284, 285
 Sultan Muzaffar Shah III, 132
 Sultan Nasiruddin, 7
 Sultanpur, 256
 Sumana, 255
 Sundar Das, 466, 507, 508
 Sunni, 369
 Supa, 169, 193, 197
 Surajmal Jat (Raja), 234, 246, 247, 356, 374, 522
 Surasen, 517
 Surat, 128, 130, 131, 203, 206, 276, 396, 417, 597, 500
 Surdas, 483, 508
 Surdas, (S/o Ramdas), 517
 Surjan Hada, (Rao), 107, 110, 189, 236, 240, 362
 Suyurghatamish, 2
 T
 Tabriz, 3
 Tafakhkhur Mirza, 478
 Tahawwur, 241, 242
 Taj Khan, 32
 Taj Khan Kirrani, 50, 67, 70, 119
 Talikota, 152, 189
 Talwandi, 248
 Tanaji Malusre, 196
 Tanda, 121
 Tanjore, 208, 303, 312, 325
 Tansen, 517
 Tarabai, 218, 298-299, 300, 303, 322-324, 364
 Tarachand, 511
 Tardi Beg, 34-35, 85, 90-93, 97
 Tatar Khan, 5, 34, 128
 Tegh Bahadur Guru, 250, 251-254, 471
 Teli garhi, 36-37, 121
 Telingana, 206, 390
 Thana, 190
 Thaneswar, 256
 Thalta, 287, 289, 336, 389-390, 497
 Tibet, 510
 Timur, 1-4, 15, 84, 259, 450-451
 Timur Qutlugh, 2
 Timur Shah, 328, 353, 358, 362
 Tippu, 234
 Tirhut, 119
 Todarmal, 55, 121-122, 132, 139, 162, 173, 387, 397, 414, 434-436, 439, 480
 Torna, 197
 Transoxiana, 351, 452, 468, 501, 513, 517, 520
 Trichinopoly, 303, 324
 Trimbak Narayan, 209
 Trimbakrao, 319
 Tukabai, 195
 Tukaram, 191
 Tukhtamish, 2
 Tukoji Maratha, 196
 Tukoji Sindhia, 357
 Tulsidas, 487, 507-508, 522
 Turkey, 360, 379, 408, 500, 513, 520
 U
 Udaji Powar, 310, 316
 Udgir, 326, 329, 355
 Udaya Bhan, 239
 Udayajit, 239
 Udayapur, 110, 242, 467
 Udaya Singh (Rana), 60, 108-110, 113, 117, 237
 Udaya Singh (Mota Raja), 113, 114

Ujjain, 57, 276-277
 Ulugh khan, 128-129
 Ulugh Beg Mirza, 3
 Umer Shaikh Mira, 3-4
 Umer-ul-Faruq (Caliph), 152
 Urfi, 505
 Usman Khan, 223
 Ustad Ali, 4
 Uttar Pradesh, 100, 116, 118, 121,
 227, 245, 483, 497

V

Vakatakas, 107
 Vallabhacharya, 483
 Vasco da Gama, 19
 Vellore, 208
 Venji, 170
 Verul, 193
 Vijayadurg, 413
 Vijaygarh, 298
 Vijayanagar, 100, 152, 188-189
 Vijay Sen Suri, 457
 Vikramaditya, 10, 104
 Vikramaditya Gaur, 41
 Vikramajit, 238
 Vinod Singh, 257
 Virabhanu, 61
 Viramdeva, 59-60
 Virasal, Rana, 85
 Virji Bohra, 500
 Vir Narayan (Raja), 189
 Vir Singh, 257
 Vir Singh Bundela, 238-239, 262,
 516
 Vishalgarh, 218
 Vishwa Rao, 355, 357
 Vishwa Singh, 222
 Vithoji, 193-194
 Vitthalnath, 483, 517
 Vrindaban, 516

Vrindabandas, 509

W

Wai, 199, 200
 Wais Khan Sarwani, 66
 Walijah, 288
 Waranangal, 188
 Wazir Khan, 255

X

Xavier, 160

Y

Yadgar Ali, 144
 Yadgar Nasir, 42
 Yadurup, 464
 Yahdoz, 135
 Yaqut, 160
 Yaqut (Baba), 209
 Yengana, 184
 Yesaji Kank, 196
 Yesu Bai, 216, 305, 364
 Yeshwant Rao Dabhade, 324
 Yeshwant Rao Pawar, 328
 Yunas Khan, 3, 353, 451
 Yusuf Adil Shah, 165
 Yusuf Chak, 14

Z

Zafar Khan, 140
 Zain Khan, 139
 Zain-ul-abidin, 450, 454, 517
 Zakaria Khan, 257, 344, 348, 351
 Zamania, 121
 Zambal Beg, 144
 Zebunnissa, 479, 505
 Zinat-un-nissa, 298, 364
 Zorawar Singh, 254
 Zulfiqar Khan, 217, 218, 231, 288,
 290-292, 298, 337, 338, 478



